

A FRAMEWORK FOR THE FUTURE OF NEW CASTLE

The 2017 New Castle Comprehensive Plan



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Introduction

The Town of New Castle, a suburban bedroom community situated in northern Westchester County, has long been an ideal place to call home. Residents highly value the Town's defining attributes: bucolic neighborhoods; a sense of history; an extensive parkland and open space network enhanced by strong recreational programs; wooded landscapes and a healthy environmental atmosphere; excellent schools; quaint hamlets with small-town charm; a central location in the New York City metropolitan region and the Hudson Valley; and long standing civic and community traditions. The preservation of these aspects of the community was the result of careful and deliberate community planning through the latter half of the 20th century. The 2017 New Castle Comprehensive Plan continues this tradition of community planning and sets forth the New Castle Community's vision for preserving the Town's strengths and addressing the Town's future needs for the next fifteen to twenty years.

The issues we face in New Castle today are at once very similar to and also very different from those we faced when the Town's last comprehensive plan, the Town Development Plan (TDP), was written in 1989. Today, the preservation of the Town's residential character and natural condition are still of utmost importance, as is the protection of the Town's environmental features. The Town also faces the same challenges in meeting the housing needs of changing demographics, including seniors, workforce employees, and young families. Meanwhile, the 21st century has introduced a host of new challenges that have changed the way land use and community planning must be approached.

The explosion of the Internet and online shopping has revolutionized consumer habits. The vast supply of products available on the World Wide Web and the convenience of shopping from home has consumers choosing to shop online rather than in person with increasing frequency. As a result, e-commerce is playing a large role in transforming the American "downtown," and is affecting the actions local businesses must take to remain relevant and successful in this new market. At the same time, as millennials' (the younger generation's) economic self-sufficiency increases and the baby boomers (older generation's) age, these populations are becoming more interested in amenities, housing, services and entertainment options, that are accessible without a personal vehicle or through public transit. There is a trend to introduce "healthy living" and "active lifestyles" into everyday actions. It is important that the Town's hamlets evolve in accordance with these demographic and economic trends.

In addition, even in communities like New Castle that are relatively free of crime and security threats, the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and increasingly frequent violent events across the country have elevated public safety concerns to the extent that they have become an important consideration for community planning. Municipalities have also developed more robust environmental disaster and adaptation plans to combat increasingly frequent and intense weather events. Finally, a sophisticated and comprehensive understanding of global climate change has emboldened localities to take action to curb air emissions, implement sustainability measures throughout town operations, and encourage more responsible resident behavior.

These global political, social and environmental shifts that have taken place since the turn of the century have impacted local economies and communities, and have therefore altered planning priorities at the local level. This Comprehensive Plan sets forth goals and policies that will enable New Castle to navigate these shifts and continue to thrive as a desirable place to live, work and play for generations to come.

From the Past to the Present

New Castle's first development plan was adopted in 1958, and its second was adopted a decade later in 1968. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, municipalities in the New York Metropolitan region experienced unprecedented population growth as young families traded in their urban lifestyles for a quieter, suburban existence. With its peaceful, single-family residential neighborhoods and proximity to New York City, New Castle provided an optimal setting for this kind of experience. Both the 1958 and 1968 plans acknowledged that growth in the Town was inevitable and established policies that would guide growth in a manner to preserve and enhance the qualities that had attracted its residents to the Town in the first place.

The Town's next comprehensive plan, the TDP, was written in 1989. Between 1956 and 1984, the percentage of land area actively developed in New Castle increased from approximately 34% to 65%. While much of this increase was due to the development of single-family residential housing, hundreds of acres of land had also been committed to open space preservation, recreational use, or watershed protection¹. Despite an increase in development and land area actively developed, the Town managed to preserve its residential character and natural feel. Like its predecessors, the preservation of these aspects of the community was the main objective of the TDP.

By the writing of the TDP, the Town faced a different kind of development pressure than it had in previous decades. In particular, New Castle was facing pressures to diversify its housing stock, the majority of which was single-family, and encourage the development of alternate housing options to serve the needs of emerging demographics. The TDP encouraged the development of multifamily housing units, but never lost sight of its primary objective: to manage anticipated development to preserve the Town's residential character and natural feel. As such, the TDP recommended the regulation of housing densities, subdivision design and building bulk to ensure that new multifamily housing developments fit within the community context, aesthetic and scale.

The desire to preserve the Town's residential character, density, and sensitive environmental features provided the motivation for many of the policies established in the TDP. It recommended that commercial development be confined to the existing boundaries of the hamlets, and that improvements in the hamlets focus on convenience and aesthetics of existing establishments rather than infill development. The TDP discouraged industrial and office development outside of areas already zoned for such use. Finally, the TDP recommended that the Town enact strict environmental regulations to protect New Castle's sensitive environmental features and preserve its open space character.

¹ 1989 TDP pg. 4

New Castle Today

Although a quarter of a century has passed since the writing of the TDP, New Castle remains remarkably unchanged in many respects. Most notably, the Town has retained its bucolic feel and low-density residential character. Chappaqua and Millwood continue to serve as the Town's main centers of retail activity and community gathering. Through the purchase or acquisition of a number of undeveloped properties, the Town has dedicated over 200 acres for open space and recreational use in New Castle, enhancing both active and passive recreational opportunities and fortifying the Town's natural condition. The preservation of these aspects of the Town – its residential character; bucolic, natural, peaceful sense of place; and healthy environment – remain the focus of this Plan. These features, along with the excellent schools and the Town's proximity to New York City, are the aspects of New Castle that attract new residents and are most prized by community members. This Plan combines best practices in sustainable planning with community input to set forth policies that directly address the preservation of these enviable assets for generations to come.

While it is of paramount importance to preserve New Castle's existing residential character, its natural condition, and its environmental health, it is also important to enhance other aspects of the Town in order for it to thrive as a sustainable community in the 21st century. Despite the policies established in the TDP encouraging the development of multifamily housing, the ratio of single-family housing units to alternative housing units in New Castle has remained relatively static since 1989². New Castle's existing housing stock, which is relatively high-cost and predominantly single-family, underserves specific populations, including empty nesters, seniors, individuals, young families, single-parent families, individuals employed in New Castle, and smaller and low-income families. There are many reasons why the supply of multifamily and other housing options has lagged behind demand, including, but not limited to, high land values and the lack of sewer and water infrastructure in most residential areas outside the Town's business hamlets.

This Plan acknowledges these challenges and picks up where the TDP left off by establishing updated goals to develop a variety of housing types at various price points in locations that provide easy access to sewer and water infrastructure, other amenities and alternative transportation. It is the Town's business hamlets and surrounding areas which provide the most viable locations for multi-family housing. Large-scale residential development of any kind in more remote, undeveloped areas of the Town faces a myriad of challenges, including but not limited to the following: (i) significant environmental constraints (such as sensitive wetlands and wetland buffers, steep slopes, public drinking water watersheds and aquifers); (ii) the lack of existing infrastructure (such as public water and sewer utilities, substandard roads in terms of surface, width, drainage and sight lines); (iii) little or no access to public transportation; and (iv) limited fire protection when public water is unavailable.

² It is important to note that as this plan is being considered, building permit applications are under review for 28 units of Affordable Housing at Chappaqua Station, and 64 mixed-income housing units in the Cupola Building at Chappaqua Crossing are under construction.

The 1989 TDP included policies that limited commercial development activity in Chappaqua and Millwood due to concerns that this increased development would compromise the community's bucolic feel, would congest roadways and would significantly increase parking demand. The development that did occur within the hamlets was kept within their existing footprints. Although there is much that residents cherish about the hamlets today, feedback from the Comprehensive Plan outreach efforts suggest that residents believe that both Chappaqua and Millwood are in critical need of revitalization.

The healthy 21st century hamlet is much more than a retail destination; it is a place for community gatherings and civic events; a place where residents can live, congregate and spend their time comfortably; a place that is aesthetically pleasing and easy to navigate for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles; and a place that offers exciting dining and entertainment options that attract community residents and visitors. While the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets fulfill some of the above criteria, they fall short on many others (e.g., limited entertainment options, limited selection of housing types, difficult pedestrian navigation, limited parking). This Plan acknowledges the need to revitalize both hamlets as more modern, mixed-use communities and establishes policies that will help support the Town's businesses in a changing economy by and stimulating activity in the hamlets. With the anticipated development of Chappaqua Crossing as a multi-use commercial and residential campus, this Plan also advocates policies that will allow it to thrive and complement the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets.

The primary intent of this Comprehensive Plan is to preserve New Castle's bucolic character of low-density, development and enhance the community's sense of place. This Plan also establishes certain goals to address the changing aspirations of the community. The Comprehensive Plan takes a position that there is a way to balance these goals to achieve the best outcome for the community as a whole. The policies set forth herein are established to protect this character while enabling New Castle to meet the needs of a 21st century community.

Structure and Content of the Comprehensive Plan

The structure of this Comprehensive Plan diverges from that of a more traditional plan, or a plan developed in the latter half of the 20th century. An older plan might include voluminous amounts of background data, which might distract from the plan's most important messages. The content of this Comprehensive Plan is intentionally more succinct and user-friendly in an effort to focus on the Town's most pressing and relevant issues. This was made possible through the use of the New Castle Base Studies, produced by the Westchester County Department of Planning, which provide the background information on which this Plan has been built. A summary of these studies, the studies themselves, and other documents that contain background information informing this Plan, are included in the Plan's appendices. All information is also hosted on the Town's website (www.mynewcastle.org).

Traditional comprehensive plans are most often organized into discrete, single-issue topic areas, such as "land use" or "transportation," with each topic area containing policies, goals and actions. This document adopts a multi-disciplinary approach which recognizes the interwoven complexity of the world in which

we live. As such, this Plan has been organized according to the plan principles put forth by the American Planning Association (APA) which include: Livable Built Environment, Harmony with Nature, Resilient Economy, Healthy Community, and Responsible Regionalism. Each chapter outlines a policy framework from which goals and their subsequent actions are derived. Further, these multi-disciplinary plan principles highlight the linkages between the traditional topic areas and allow for a coordinated planning process, which incorporates universally applicable planning concepts, such as sustainability, wherever necessary. Additionally, the APA's framework has helped to ensure this Plan exemplifies best planning practices which will equip the Town of New Castle with effective planning tools to address current and relevant issues as well as position the town to be competitive in the search of funding opportunities.

New Castle embraces the beauty and benefits of recognizing and appreciating different backgrounds and interests and strives to establish a diverse community that encourages respect and tolerance for others. With that said APA's sixth plan principle, Interwoven Equity, is not specifically discussed in a stand-alone chapter. Interwoven Equity is intended to ensure fairness and equity in providing for the housing, services, health, safety and livelihood needs for all citizens and groups. The policy discussions, goals and actions contained throughout this Plan call for housing, services and necessary planning policies which will encourage and respect the individual differences that enrich the community and therefore embody the objectives of Interwoven Equity.

Public participation was the key element in the development of this Plan. Volunteer working groups and a five-member Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee were appointed to work with planning staff to develop this document. In addition, resident input collected during the 2014-2015 Comprehensive Plan public outreach processes shaped the policy discussion and the goals found within this document to reflect the true needs and desires of the community. A full description of the community engagement process can also be found on the Plan's website (www.mynewcastle.com).

Chapter 1: Livable Built Environment

The “built environment” is comprised of a community’s developed spaces, the transportation infrastructure that connects these spaces, and the utility infrastructure that enables these spaces to be used and occupied. Neighborhoods, commercial centers, institutions, civic facilities and the supporting transportation, energy, and information infrastructure are all elements of the built environment. The way in which these elements have been planned for, designed, developed and situated within a particular landscape gives a place its unique character and helps to establish a certain quality of life for residents. A Livable Built Environment is sustainable and ensures a high quality of life for all.

New Castle’s built environment is comprised largely of single-family residential neighborhoods set among wooded hillsides. These residential neighborhoods are interspersed with landmarks that give the Town its strong historical character. Winding country roads connect these neighborhoods with the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets, Chappaqua Crossing, and the Town’s parks and preserves, as well as the Chappaqua Train Station and the Taconic and Saw Mill River Parkways. Carefully designed drinking, waste and storm water systems provide crucial services that enable the use of residential and community facilities. These aspects of the Town’s built environment work harmoniously to make New Castle a desirable place to live.



Image 1- Horace Greeley House. Source: <https://artswestchester.org/profile/newcastlehis/>



Image 2 - The New Castle Arts Center, formerly the Kipp School. Source: New Castle Dept. of Recreation and Parks

Maintaining a livable built environment in New Castle requires preserving the Town’s bucolic, residential character and its historic resources, while promoting new mixed-use development in the hamlets to meet the community’s housing needs³ and fostering thriving commercial and civic spaces. A livable built environment for the residents of New Castle includes efficient transportation infrastructure that facilitates connections between the Town’s hamlets, provides access to and parking for the train station and downtown businesses, and establishes safe spaces for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists. Finally, a

³ Refer to demographic and housing discussion on p.9

livable built environment is a sustainable environment, one which provides and maintains the necessary infrastructure and services to support the Town's needs.

Land Use and Housing

Today, as it was in 1989, New Castle's land area is comprised mainly of bucolic, low-density residential neighborhoods. Of the Town's approximately 15,000 acres, 14,488 acres are zoned for single-family residential use, and of these, 91% (13,194 acres) have one- or two-acre minimum lot sizes.⁴ The remaining 9% (1,294 acres) of residentially zoned land area has half- and quarter-acre minimum lot sizes. This low density residential development pattern, derived from the Town's zoning, has helped to maintain scenic vistas, large lots, areas of open space quality, and forested and undisturbed swaths of land that characterize the Town's neighborhoods. Preservation of the bucolic residential character of the community's neighborhoods is a priority to New Castle's residents and has been made a priority in this Plan.

New Castle's housing stock is predominantly single-family. Of the 6,037⁵ housing units in New Castle, approximately 5,530 (92%)⁶ are single-family. Over the past few decades, following zoning changes made to the Town Code in the 1970s and recommendations made in the TDP, a number of multi-family housing units were developed around the Town. Today, there are approximately 655 townhouse units in the Town of New Castle as well as 135 permitted accessory apartments, although this number may actually be higher as not all accessory apartments in use have been permitted. As this plan is being finalized building permits are in place to construct more than 92 (some of them affordable and work-force) multi-family housing units in the community's hamlet areas and at Chappaqua Crossing within the next five years. If constructed as planned, these units will help diversify the Town's housing stock, while maintaining the pattern of low density development outside the hamlets.

Demographics and Housing

As compared to housing prices in surrounding municipalities and the County as a whole, housing prices in much of New Castle are relatively high. Between 2007 and 2016, median sales prices for homes in New Castle were, on average, \$245,030 higher than median sales prices for all homes in Westchester County⁷. In 2016, the median sale price for a home in New Castle was \$850,500, whereas the County's median sales price was \$623,350⁸. Rental costs in the Town and County show a similar trend.

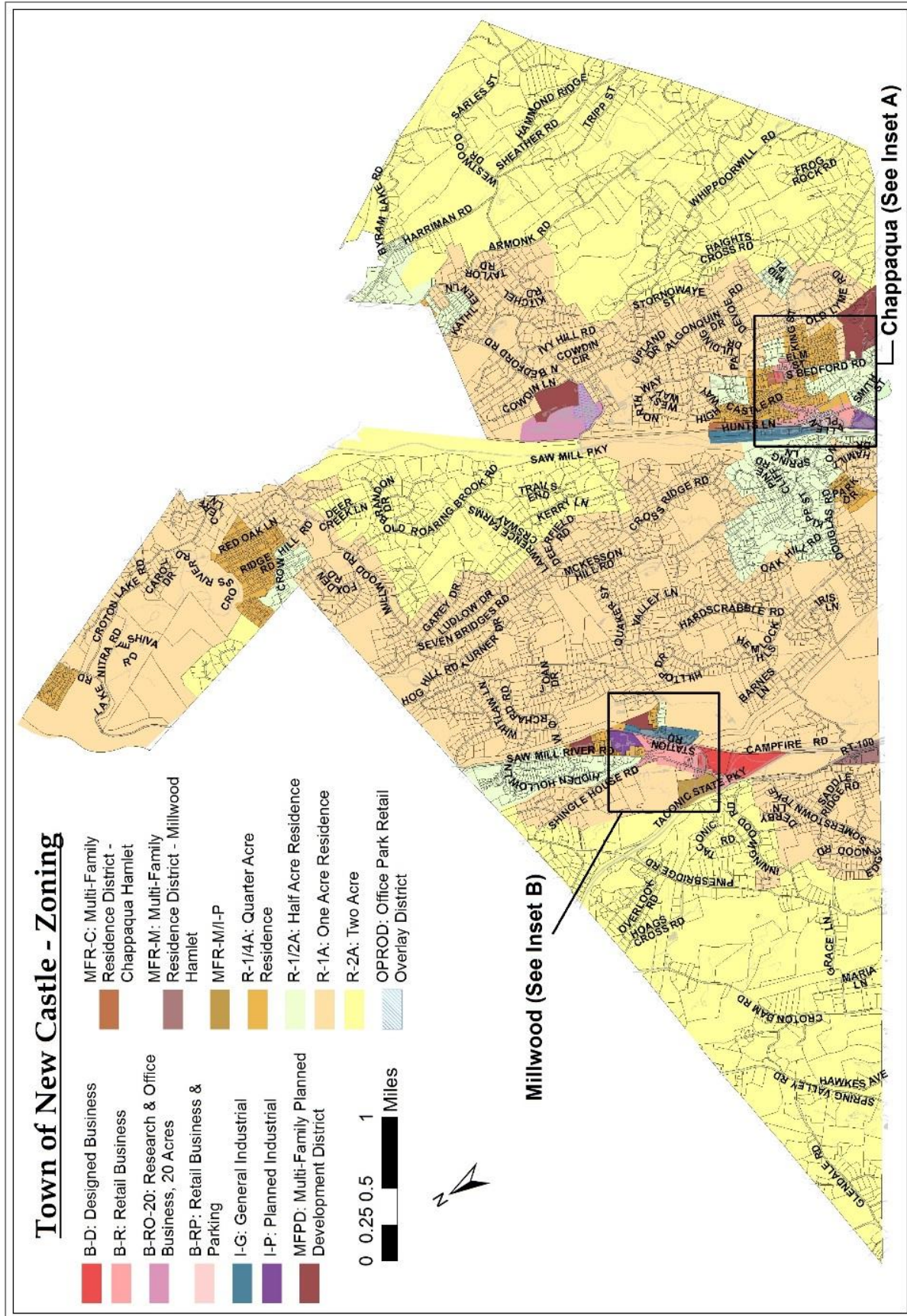
⁴ Westchester County Base Studies

⁵ Westchester County Base Studies count

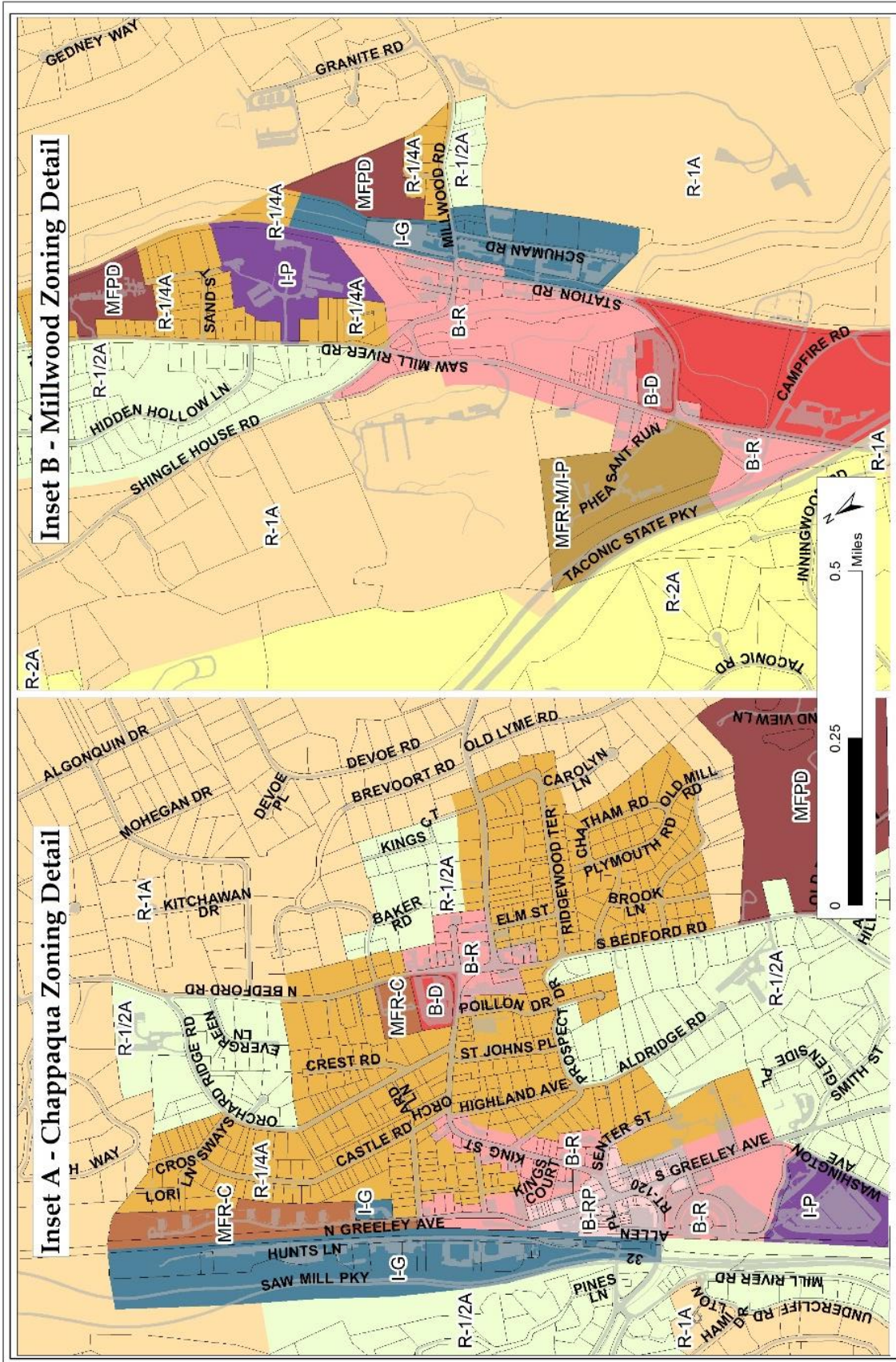
⁶ Town of New Castle 2014 Assessment Roll

⁷ Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service data

⁸ Hudson Gateway Multiple Listing Service data



Map 1 - Town of New Castle Zoning Map. Source: New Castle GIS, Westchester County GIS



Map 2 – Chappaqua and Millwood Zoning Detail Maps. Source: New Castle GIS, Westchester County GIS

The predominance of high-cost, single-family housing and the limited supply of alternative housing types continue to pose challenges for certain demographic groups in the community. Empty-nesters, retirees and seniors who would like to stay in the community and “age in place,” but do not have the physical or financial means to maintain a single-family home, have relatively few alternative and/or affordable housing options in New Castle. Despite their desire to remain in the community, and as children graduate from the school system, longtime residents tend to move to other communities with more housing options and amenities, such as alternative transportation options which do not require ownership of a personal vehicle, despite their desire to remain in the Town. The high cost of housing as well as the lack of alternative housing types also makes it difficult for young and single-income families and individuals employed within the Town and millennials (those age 18-33 years) in general to live in the community. Much of this has been evidenced through the population and demographic condition of the community.

While New Castle’s population has grown (quickly in the 1950s and ‘60s, and then more gradually into the 21st century), the age distribution of the Town’s population has generally remained consistent through the decades as reflected in Figure 1. Since the 1950s, New Castle’s population has been composed mainly of families with school-age children. Those between the ages of 5 and 19 have made up 25-30% of the population, while people ages 35 to 59 have consistently comprised 38-44%. Figure 1 also reflects a slight trend amongst those between the ages of 20 and 34 and those over 60 which indicates that as couples have chosen to have children later in life and the baby boomer population (ages 60-74) has aged, people between the ages of 20 and 34 have comprised a smaller percentage of the Town’s population than ever before, while the percentage represented by those between the ages of 60 and 74 has increased.

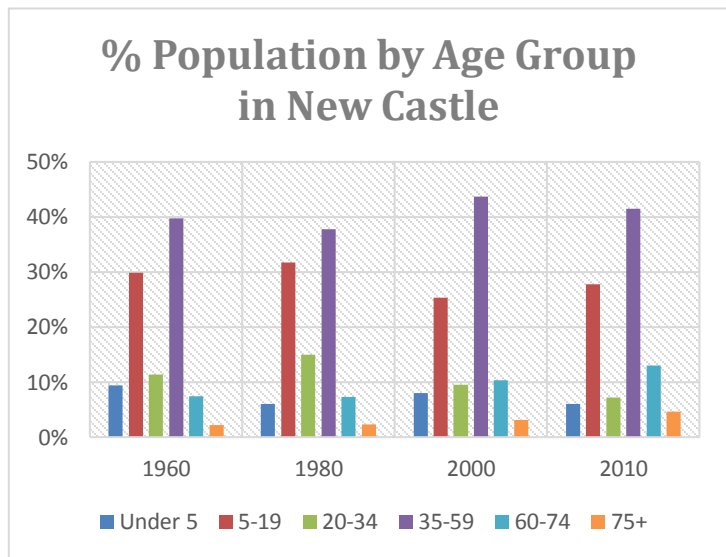


Figure 1 – Source: 1989 TDP, US Decennial Census

New Castle’s age distribution through the years reveals a few key trends. First, it is likely that families with school-age children will continue to make up a considerable portion of New Castle’s population and will be served by the existing single-family housing stock within the Town. Second, the senior population, those age 60 or above, will continue to increase as the baby boomer generation ages, notwithstanding the trend of outmigration for those whose children have graduated from the school system. The reduction in the percentage of those between age 18-33 (millennials) appears to be consistent with national trends of re-urbanization whereby young people are moving from the suburbs to the city and are becoming less reliant on the private automobile.

Housing Alternatives and Infill Development

This Comprehensive Plan advocates for the development of alternative housing at a range of price points which will satisfy the housing needs of the populations that are currently underserved by the Town's existing housing stock, in particular, seniors, low-income families, and young professionals. Alternative housing developed within a single-family residential neighborhood must be consistent with the neighborhood's character, aesthetic and scale. This can be achieved through creative design techniques (e.g. "gate" houses and two-family houses that appear as single family homes). Whenever possible, alternative housing should be developed as part of infill development within the hamlets, or in areas surrounding the hamlets, where residents can access amenities and services without the use of a private vehicle.

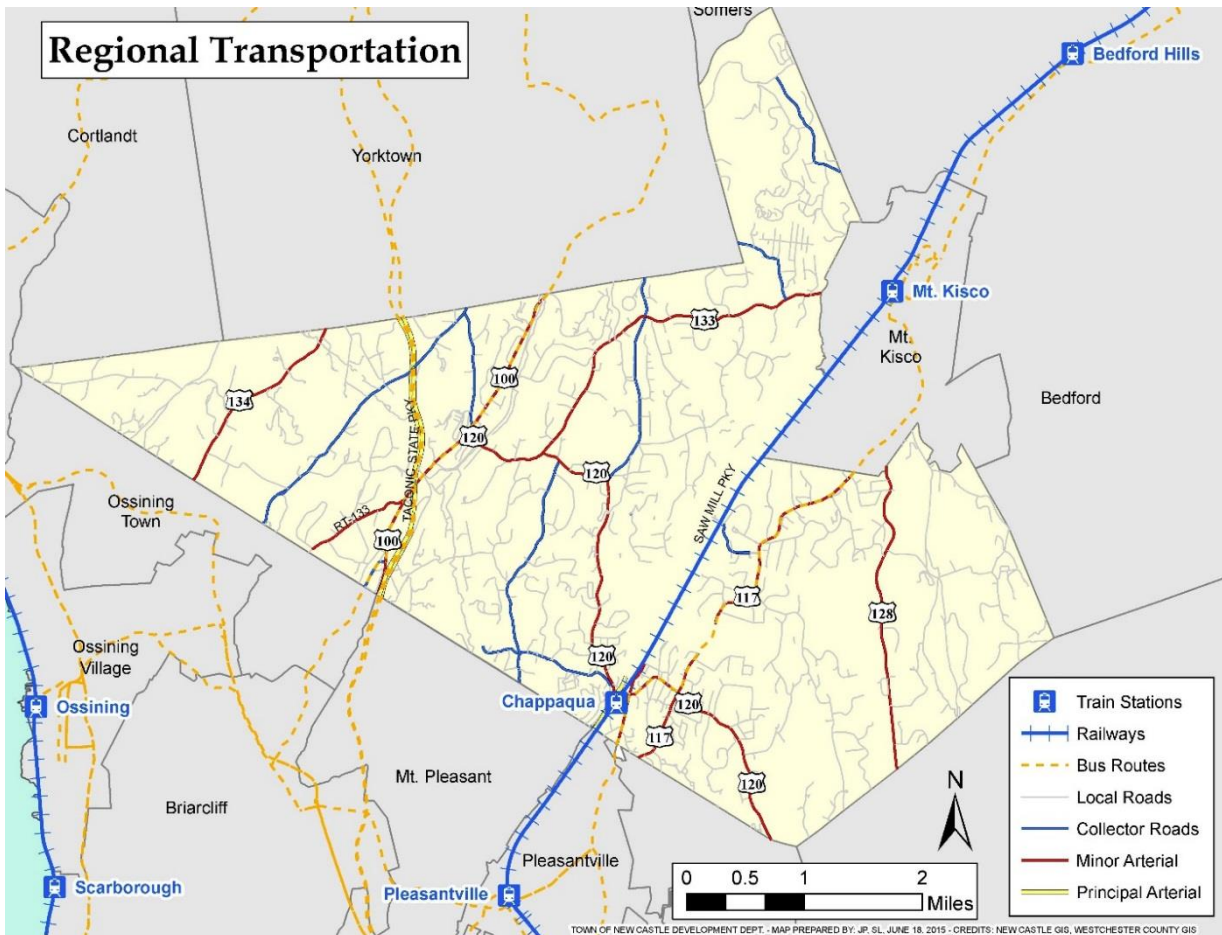
Throughout the public outreach process, many residents advocated for an increase in housing variety, both in type and price. Some called for the development of smaller, more affordable starter homes for families and young couples, as well as alternative housing types for seniors, millennials and workforce populations. Some residents, on the other hand, are content with the existing housing stock and expressed their satisfaction with the predominance of single-family residential homes.

The TDP discouraged infill development in the hamlets to keep them visually compatible with the residential character of the Town, and to balance traffic generation, road capacity, and parking demands. This Plan encourages sustainable mixed-use development where daily goods, services, entertainment and recreational opportunities with reduced dependence on private automobiles. This would further balance traffic generation, road capacity and parking demands. Expanded mixed-use development within the Town's hamlets promotes a higher density of development where it is appropriate and most practical. It will also help to address the community's expressed desire for a greater diversity of retail, restaurant, entertainment and cultural opportunities in the hamlets. For more on this discussion, refer to Chapter 3: Resilient Economy.

Transportation Network

New Castle's livability is affected by the ease of movement around Town and between and within the hamlets. In New Castle, it is easy to travel north to south and vice versa; NYS Routes 134, 100, 117 and 128 and the County's Pinesbridge and Seven Bridges Roads provide easy vehicular access between the Town's northern- and southern-most boundaries, and into neighboring municipalities. Travelling from east to west is less simple; NYS Route 120, NYS Route 133 and Roaring Brook Road provide less efficient transit in an east-to-west direction between the hamlets. While east-to-west traffic flow is expected to remain limited primarily because of existing environmental and topographic conditions, this Plan establishes goals to enhance existing connections and establish alternative transportation linkages between the hamlets and major destinations within the Town and region.

As was the case in 1989, privately owned vehicles still provide the predominant method of transportation in New Castle today. As car companies introduce autonomous or “self-driving” cars into the automotive marketplace over the next few years, dependence on automobiles is unlikely to change since such vehicles might enable private travel by those who are unable to drive independently⁹. Besides school bus service, there is currently inadequate public or alternative transportation network that provides linkages within the Town. In regards to public transportation and transportation linkages with municipalities in the surrounding region, both Millwood and Chappaqua are each served by a Westchester County Bee Line bus. Bus route #19 from Pleasantville through the Chappaqua hamlet and continues into the Village of Mount Kisco, while bus route #15 travels from Briarcliff and Mt. Pleasant through the hamlet of Millwood into the Town of Yorktown. Service can be infrequent and inconsistent, which can affect utilization.



Map 3 - Source: New Castle GIS, Westchester County GIS

Conversely, the Chappaqua Train Station, which provides access to Metro North’s Harlem Line and a fifty-minute average train ride to New York City, is highly utilized by Town residents and non-residents alike.

⁹ Ford, BMW, General Motors, Tesla- All of the big car companies are working towards releasing fleets of autonomous or “self-driving” cars into the automotive marketplace within the next 10 years. Expert members of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE) estimate that up to 75% of all vehicles will be autonomous by 2040. (Source: IEEE, 2012-09-05).

This is the only train station within the Town. As such it is worth noting that residents also use train stations located in Mount Kisco, Ossining and elsewhere, depending on the proximity of the train station to their place of residence. Every week day, the commuter parking lots abutting the train station in the Chappaqua hamlet, which provide over 1,300 parking spaces, fill to near capacity by early to mid-morning. During peak periods, queuing of cars affects the flow of traffic in and out of the train station and slows vehicular circulation throughout the hamlet. In addition, overflowing public parking lots, a lack of wayfinding signage and the design of Chappaqua's circulation system can make it difficult for drivers, especially those unfamiliar with the Chappaqua hamlet, to park and shop.

The Comprehensive Plan outreach process revealed resident frustrations over inadequate parking access and supply, traffic congestion and unsafe vehicular and pedestrian conditions in the Chappaqua Hamlet. Residents expressed a strong interest in enhancing and expanding pedestrian and bicycle amenities to improve both the connections between and the experience within the Town's hamlets. Residents also insisted that bike paths and sidewalks be provided on main roads throughout Town, as this would improve the safety for those who walk and bike along these roads.

The redevelopment of Chappaqua Crossing as a multi-use traditional neighborhood designed campus currently includes the provision of a jitney connection to the Chappaqua Hamlet and the Metro North railroad station. Expanding alternative transportation connections, such as the jitney, between the Millwood and Chappaqua hamlets and creating smoother circulation within downtown Chappaqua (particularly in regards to traffic flow and parking during weekends and peak commute times) would greatly improve mobility for New Castle residents. While it is likely that the primary method of transportation will remain the privately owned car, Town residents have expressed desire for community and public transportation as well as solutions for a strained parking supply. This Plan promotes development that acknowledges growing parking demand, seeks to increase reliance on the use of alternative transportation and propagates the policies put forth in the TDP in support of the expansion of sidewalks, trailways and bike lanes. Establishing visual circulation aids, such as wayfinding and other signage, will also help facilitate more cohesive connections between the hamlets and other prominent destinations, both within the Town and the region.

Water and Sewer Infrastructure

New Castle's built environment is supported by a model water system, private wells and sewer infrastructure systems, including privately owned septic systems. Roughly 80% of New Castle's land area is supplied drinking water through the New Castle-Stanwood Water District. Well water serves the remaining land area and in these areas, protection of the potable aquifers requires enhanced measures and regulatory tools. As was advocated for in the TDP, much of the Town has remained disconnected from a sewer system due to the high cost associated with connection and regional capacity issues. While there are some areas, mainly in and around the Chappaqua hamlet, that are sewerred, a majority of the Town relies on septic systems for subsurface wastewater disposal. This has hampered potential land use development in the Millwood hamlet and has forced dependence on aging septic systems in neighborhoods that would greatly benefit from access to sanitary sewers.

The Town of New Castle received authorization from the Westchester Board of Legislators, by Act No. 196-2011, approving the Town's request that Westchester County expand the Saw Mill River Sewer District to allow wastewater from the Random Farms Wastewater Treatment Plant (serving the Random Farms Conservation Subdivision) and the Fox Hollow Wastewater Treatment Plant (serving the Riverwoods Condominiums and the Yeshiva Farm Settlement) to be diverted to the Yonkers Wastewater Treatment Plant owned and operated by Westchester County. This request was generated due to the historical evidence of difficulty with the operation and maintenance of the existing package wastewater treatment plants. The Town also obtained a commitment of \$10 million of the Westchester County Water Quality Improvement Program Fund (East of Hudson Fund) to partially fund the \$25 million dollar project to construct infrastructure to connect the new areas of the sewer district within the Croton watershed to the County's wastewater treatment facility in Yonkers. Negotiations between the New York City Department of Environmental Protection, Westchester County and the Town are ongoing for additional monies and additional funding sources are being explored. This Plan further recommends undertaking feasibility studies for installing sanitary sewer systems in residential areas where failing septic systems have caused or may cause negative environmental impacts. The same studies should be conducted in and around the Millwood Hamlet to determine the form and shape of revitalization. In early 2017 the New Castle Town Board contracted with Woodard and Curran to undertake the Millwood Sanitary Sewer District Feasibility Study to evaluate alternatives for providing future sanitary sewer service to the Millwood Sanitary Sewer District (MSSD). The analysis consists of a planning level project which will evaluate the options available to the Town of New Castle, including preliminary project cost estimates and schematic layouts. It is the policy of this Plan, as it was stated in the TDP, that the expansion of wastewater systems and other associated public infrastructure should not take place mainly to allow for additional development and higher densities.

Livable Built Environment Goals

Meeting the needs of New Castle's livable built environment over the next fifteen to twenty years will require specific actions to be undertaken. The following goals focus on the preservation of the bucolic residential character of the community's neighborhoods and the provision of alternative and more affordable housing. They support a desire for more vibrant, hamlets with enhanced mobility. Finally, they promote the improvement and maintenance of crucial sewer and water infrastructure systems. The Implementation Table further expands upon the goals listed below and lists specific actions that will enable the Town to meet the intent of this Comprehensive Plan over the next fifteen to twenty years.

Goal 1. Preserve the bucolic residential character of the community's neighborhoods.

All development should complement and maintain the bucolic character of the community's neighborhoods. Amendments to the Town's zoning regulations should be crafted as to ensure that the development that occurs is consistent with the bucolic character of the Town's residential neighborhoods and to encourage development that keeps with the density, scale, character and aesthetic quality of the existing built environment in the Town's various zoning districts.

Goal 2. Locate higher density residential development in hamlets, with density of development decreasing as distance from hamlet centers increases.

To allow for higher density residential (not mixed-use) development in areas immediately surrounding the hamlets while maintaining the residential character of the neighborhoods, the Town should revise the regulations found in the zoning code regarding transition areas surrounding the hamlets. Alternative zoning approaches, including form-based codes, should be considered for areas within the hamlets and associated transition areas. Regulations should be revised to allow for development, while ensuring it does not disrupt the single-family residential character of the adjacent neighborhood and should include guidance regarding the appropriate scale, density and housing type.

Goal 3. Facilitate a range of housing types that are affordable to a diverse residential population in the hamlets and surrounding areas.

Facilitating a range of housing options in or in the hamlets or surrounding areas would provide a diverse set of residents, from young professionals and low-income families to workforce and senior populations, with access to amenities and services. The Town Code should be updated to better encourage the provision of mixed-use, multi-family, condominiums, townhouses, senior and workforce housing, and accessory dwelling units in such areas as part of infill and mixed use developments. Currently, the Town Code requires the provision of a certain percentage or number of affordable units in new multi-family developments in all multi-family residential zoning districts. Determine whether existing percentages should be increased and/or expanded to apply to mixed-use development.

Goal 4. Provide a range of housing types that are affordable to a diverse residential population throughout the community where supported by this Plan.

To encourage the development of alternative housing options available to households with a range of income levels, housing legislation (i.e. zoning) and development incentives within the Town Code should be studied. Currently, the Town Code requires a certain percentage or number of lots be created for the provision of an affordable housing unit in new subdivisions. The Town should determine whether existing percentages should be increased to better encourage price point and housing type variation in all zoning districts. So as to maintain New Castle's bucolic, single-family residential character, all new housing units should be consistent with the character, aesthetic and scale of the neighborhood within which they will be located. Alternative housing consisting of smaller single-family homes (e.g. "gate" houses), two-family homes and accessory apartments located in single-family residence buildings should be developed using creative design techniques to appropriately fit seamlessly among existing residences in the Town's low-density neighborhoods. Large-scale residential development of any kind in more remote, undeveloped areas of the town faces a myriad of challenges, including but not limited to the following: (i) significant environmental constraints (such as sensitive wetlands and wetland buffers, steep slopes, public drinking water watersheds and aquifers); (ii) the lack of existing infrastructure (such

as public water and sewer utilities, substandard roads in terms of surface, width, drainage and sight lines); (iii) little or no access to public transportation; and (iv) limited fire protection when public water is unavailable. Alternative housing should be developed as part of infill and mixed-use developments in the Town's hamlets and surrounding areas.

This goal can also be accomplished through the reuse and repurposing of underutilized properties. The Town should coordinate with financial institutions or non-profit organizations to identify properties that may be redeveloped or reused as alternative housing available to a range of income levels.

Goal 5. Encourage the placement of housing units of various economic value throughout new multi-family and mixed-use developments (i.e. market rate units next to workforce/affordable units).

Based on housing trends and economic conditions, it should be required that a certain percentage of units in all new multi-family housing developments and mixed-use buildings are affordable, and that these units are interspersed throughout those of higher value. The zoning code should be revised to ensure that affordable housing units are interspersed among those that are market rate, as opposed to clustered together or physically separate from other housing units.

Goal 6. Preserve and protect historic resources

The preservation of historic resources is integral not only to preserve but celebrate what gives the Town its identity, creating a stronger sense of place and community among residents. The Landmarks Advisory Committee (LAC), led by the Town Historian, maintains a list of landmarked properties in the Town and endeavors to add historic properties to the list in order to maintain the Town's unique, historic landscape. Approximately two buildings are added to the list of landmarked properties in New Castle each year. There are many historical assets that have not yet been considered, cataloged or marked as such, including trees, parks, businesses and streets. Additionally, many buildings in New Castle could be considered historic for reasons other than age or previous occupants; design and architecture could also play a role in categorizing certain structures as historic. The Town should partner with the Historical Society, when appropriate, to provide resources, such as manpower or program support, to stimulate research activity and awareness regarding the Town's historic resources.

Goal 7. Support the improvement and promote the use of alternative transit services including rail, bus, and school transportation.

To enhance access and mobility of all those who live, work and play in the Town, the Town should coordinate with Westchester County to provide more frequent bus service, more cross-town service and streamlined service to the hamlets. An outreach program and incentives to promote alternative transportation should be developed. The Town should coordinate with the school districts to examine school bus ridership trends and, if necessary, encourage ridership through

outreach campaigns. The Town should also coordinate with the Chappaqua Bus Company to explore opportunities to use their services to fulfill community transportation needs, such as public transportation between the hamlets.

Goal 8. Ensure underserved and/or special need populations have access to adequate public transportation services.

Access and mobility must be enhanced for all populations, especially those who do not or cannot rely on privately-owned automobiles to get around. The Town should determine whether or not there are populations that have special needs or are underserved when it comes to existing public transportation services and, if necessary, identify areas for enhancement of public transportation for those populations. The Town should also remain attuned to the transportation needs of seniors and engage with merchants to make mass transit easier for their employees to use and access.

Goal 9. Alleviate traffic congestion.

Traffic, especially in the Chappaqua hamlet during rush hour periods and on the weekends, is a major source of resident frustration. The Town should explore the use of alternative traffic circulation patterns in and around the Chappaqua Train Station during peak travel times and in the hamlet during the weekends. To alleviate traffic outside of the hamlets, intersections prone to congestion and conflict should be identified, and traffic flow improvement solutions should be developed.

Goal 10. Provide access for non-motorized forms of transportation, make streets accessible for all users (i.e. pedestrians of all ages and abilities, cyclists, vehicles) and promote walkability.

Streets that provide safe access to all users, pedestrians, cyclists and motor vehicles alike, are called Complete Streets. The Town should look to provide Complete Streets provisions on its roadways, where appropriate. Priority should be given to roads that connect neighborhoods to the hamlets, schools and other locations of public gathering. A Complete Streets policy document that is specific to the Town should be generated so that the Complete Street provisions made on the Town's roadways are appropriate for the Town's roadways and improve safety. A Sidewalk Plan for the hamlet areas and outlying neighborhoods as well as neighborhoods near the schools and other public gathering spaces should be developed. The Town should also examine the feasibility of sidewalks within and between neighborhoods that do not border the hamlet areas, and on all major routes including Route 117, 100, 120, 133 and 128. Coordination with County and State permitting entities should be undertaken.

Goal 11. Improve circulation and connectivity within and between the hamlets and Chappaqua Crossing.

Improving circulation and connectivity within and between hamlets will mean ensuring that residents and visitors of the Town can make their way around and find opportunities to park. The Town should review and update parking standards to determine appropriate ratios of parking demand to development. The visibility of public parking opportunities in the hamlets should be improved through directional signage and implementation of a wayfinding program to enhance connections between the hamlets and other destinations of local and regional importance. A shared parking forecast should also be developed to assess the feasibility of a shared parking initiative.

Goal 12. Improve accessibility of train service.

To improve the accessibility of the train service, traffic circulation issues at the Chappaqua Train Station should be addressed. Additionally and consistent with traffic circulation improvements, the Town should explore opportunities for public-private partnerships in constructing a parking structure to serve the train station and the Chappaqua hamlet.

Goal 13. Ensure adequate infrastructure service to meet existing and future demand.

Infrastructure services include roads; stormwater, sewer, and drinking water systems; clean energy systems such as LED lighting, microgrids and/or combined heat and power (CHP) installations; and potable water and fire suppression technologies, among others. The Town should develop an Infrastructure Inventory, Repair and Replacement Plan that includes the history of infrastructure district creation (if applicable), quantifies existing infrastructure capacity and identifies needed improvements regarding expansion of service for health and safety (including fire suppression) and in relation to hazard mitigation measures as discussed in the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan. Proposed development projects should be coordinated with the Town's infrastructure needs, including the continued examination of the feasibility of extending sewer service to the Millwood hamlet and areas where septic systems are failing. The expansion of wastewater systems and other associated infrastructure should not take place solely to allow for additional higher density development, to the detriment of the environment, or without some additional benefit that meets other goals of this Plan. For example, the expansion of infrastructure systems should enhance the use of clean/green technology, expand opportunities for alternative and/or affordable housing, and/or aid in building alternative transportation linkages.

Goal 14. Promote development in areas with existing infrastructure over areas with limited or no infrastructure service.

This goal is established in order to limit development in more bucolic parts of Town to preserve their character and avoid disturbances to biotic/ naturally existing corridors. Infill development should be promoted in areas with supportive infrastructure and should be planned for sparingly

in areas that lack the necessary infrastructure. Existing infrastructure mapping should be enhanced to aid in these efforts.

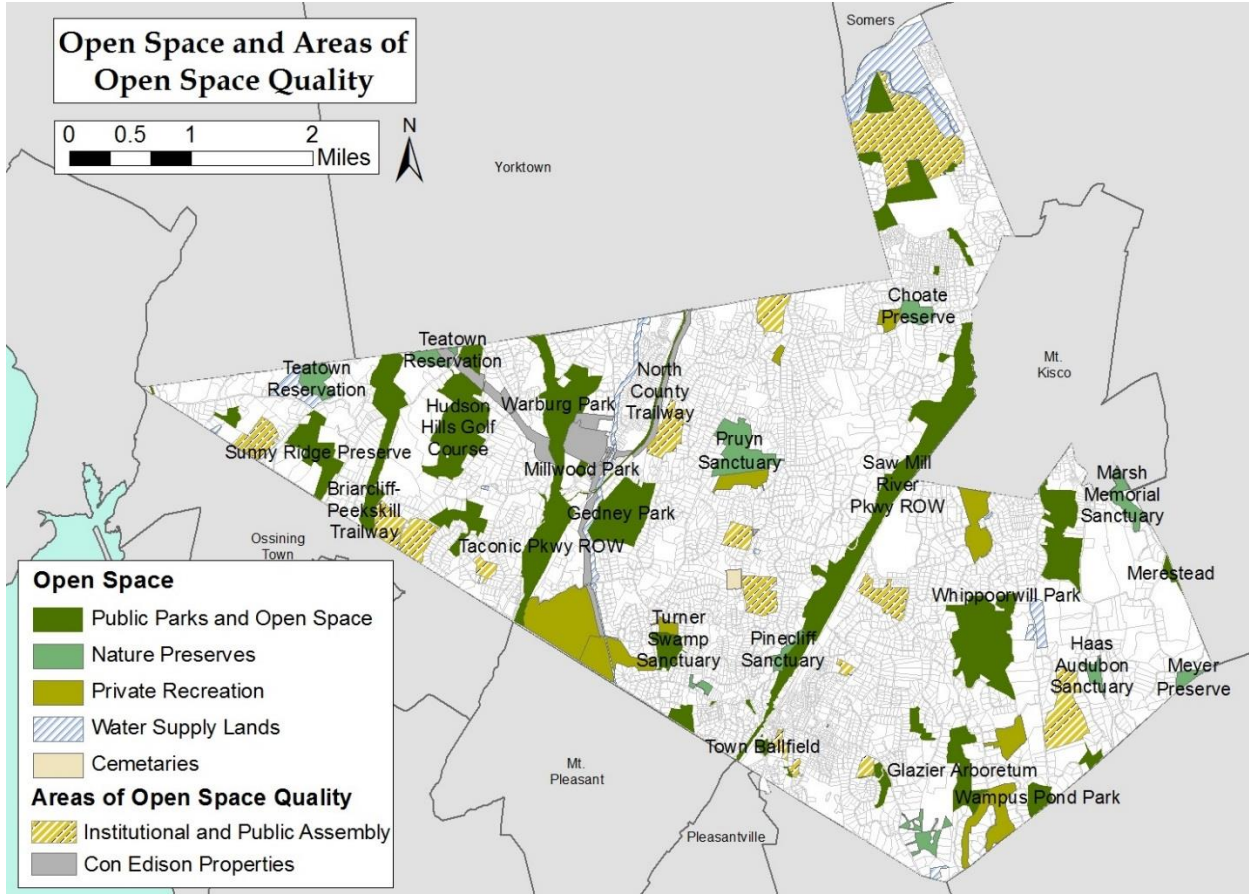
Chapter 2: Harmony with Nature

New Castle’s natural environment is a defining asset of the Town. Wetlands, lakes, streams, woodlands, and open space corridors provide habitats for a range of flora and fauna, as well as a peaceful, healthy, and scenic atmosphere for the Town’s residents. This chapter, *Harmony with Nature*, establishes policies that will help preserve the health and vitality of the Town’s natural assets and ecosystems that have been studiously maintained throughout the Town’s history. This Plan calls for the strengthening of the Town’s environmental protection regulations where necessary, as well as the development of plans for open space management and biodiversity. Additionally, this Plan establishes policies to reduce the adverse environmental impacts of new development through innovative practices that embrace energy efficiency, minimize pollution, and implement green technology. The policies set forth in this chapter will help safeguard the Town’s natural assets and rural quality beloved by New Castle residents now and into the future.

Open Space and Natural Features

As discussed in Chapter 1, *Livable Built Environment*, the Town’s most visible environmental asset is its bucolic character. The Town’s natural setting has been preserved through careful land use planning, environmental conservation and the designation of open space lands. New Castle’s open spaces and areas of open space character (due to large industrial properties and large residential properties) provide immense benefits to the community. They support natural ecosystems and serve as a habitat for the region’s biodiverse animal and plant populations. They provide settings for residents to interact with the natural environment, to gather, and to engage in both passive and active recreation. Lastly, they shape the Town’s natural, peaceful and pristine character. It is important that open spaces are protected and managed so that they continue to provide these benefits.

Of the Town’s 15,000 acres, approximately 4,418 can be categorized as open space according to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC). The NYSDEC’s definition of open space includes agricultural lands; cemeteries; local, County and State parks and parkway lands; nature preserves; private recreation; vacant or undeveloped lands; and water supply lands. Large lots that exist among New Castle’s low-density residential areas that are not included in the DEC’s definition of open space, such as school campuses, Con Edison lands and other institutional properties, also contribute significantly towards the Town’s bucolic open space character. These lands were the subject of much discussion in the TDP, as it was recognized that it was critical to maintain the open space character of these lands in order to preserve that of the Town. This Plan carries forth this idea and recommends that the Town’s Open Space Management Plan be updated not only to maintain established open spaces, but also to maintain the character of lands that provide open space benefits but are not officially defined or designated as such.



Map 1 - Open Space and Areas of Open Space Quality. Source: New Castle GIS, Westchester County GIS. Vacant and undeveloped lands were not included on this map.

New Castle’s landscape is rich in environmental resources. There are twenty-one New York State designated wetlands dispersed throughout the Town, which span a total of 849 acres.¹⁰ Other, smaller wetlands have been identified and mapped as part of the National Wetland Inventory, and there are more still that remain unmapped. Upland river valleys, slopes and ridgelines surround these low-lying wetlands.

The Town’s topography ranges from a low of approximately 190 feet above sea level to a high of approximately 770 feet above sea level. About 39% of the land in New Castle (5,799 acres) contains steep slopes. Of these areas, 3,660 acres have slopes of 15-25% and 2,139 acres have slopes greater than 25%. The most significant concentrations of steep slopes are located on the west end of Town. The preservation of the natural vegetation on these slopes has become increasingly important for the purposes of limiting erosion and flooding.

The Town’s topographic and environmental features serve as a habitat for a range of flora and fauna, many of which are part of a unique ecosystem referred to as seasonal forest pools or woodland vernal pools. A wide variety of amphibians thrive in these seasonal forest pools and wetland ecosystems. The Town’s species include deer, coyotes, Cooper’s Hawk, Sharp-Shinned Hawk, and various fish species such

¹⁰ New York State Department of Environmental Conservation mapping

as bass, trout, bluegill, and crappie. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service maintain lists of threatened and endangered species, some of which may be found within the Town's borders. These biodiverse species rely on the health of the Town's natural landscape, while the upkeep of the landscape itself depends on the survival of the species that make it their home. The Town of New Castle recognizes the value of our natural environment and the fact that it is not wholly within the Town's control. As can be seen through various regional studies, natural systems do not follow municipal boundaries. As an example, in 2004, the Metropolitan Conservation Alliance produced the Croton-to-Highlands Biodiversity Plan (CHBP) to promote the conservation of the rich biodiversity of natural habitats and wildlife found in northern Westchester. A portion of New Castle's west end was included within the CHBP. A Town-wide biodiversity plan has yet to be developed in New Castle. This Plan recommends the development of a Town-wide Biodiversity Management Plan that includes among other things, identification of invasive species and their impacts as well as a Natural Resource Index to aid in a more systematic approach to the preservation and support of the Town's natural ecosystems and habitats.

Watersheds and Water Supply

The Town's major streams and tributaries include the Saw Mill River and Kisco River. The Town is located within four major watersheds: the Pocantico/Saw Mill River Watershed, the Bronx River Watershed, the Long Island Sound Watershed and the Croton (River) Watershed as well as many smaller watersheds including the Indian Brook Basin, the Cornell Brook Basin and the Gedney Brook Basin, among others. The Croton Watershed, which encompasses 63% (9,413 acres) of the Town's land area, supplies a portion of New York City's drinking water, and as such, the area of New Castle that falls within in it is subject to heightened NYSDEC Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permit requirements and other regulations as dictated by the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP). Much of the development within this watershed is also subject to review and permitting by the NYCDEP through authority granted to them in the 1997 *New York City Watershed Agreement*. This agreement was established to protect New York City's drinking water while balancing local governments' ability to control land use.

In 1993, New Castle's water filtration plant was put online and the Town's water distribution network was significantly expanded. Today, there are fewer households that rely on groundwater wells for drinking water than there were at the writing of the TDP. However, for those households that rely on groundwater, and for the environmental health of the region at large, measures taken in the Town to address groundwater pollution and to mitigate the effects of stormwater runoff on water quality continue to promote significant environmental benefits. New Castle's groundwater is supplied largely by aquifers and aquifer recharge areas underneath the surface of the earth. The soils that cover these aquifers have a high percolation rate and are recharged by rainwater and stormwater. As such, these soils can easily transmit water containing pollutants to the aquifers and into the groundwater. Groundwater pollutants often go undetected, and even after they have been discovered, can be hard to remove. The TDP recommended that aquifers be protected and regulated in the Town the same way streams and wetlands were, but conceded that a detailed hydrogeological study (including the mapping of private wells) would be needed

to identify and delineate major aquifers. This Plan recommends conducting such a study as part of mitigating the negative impacts of stormwater runoff and pollutants, planning for a lasting potable water supply.

Climate Change

Since 1989, public awareness of global climate change has increased as the international scientific community has learned more about its causes and effects. A variety of climate change impacts have already been observed and recorded in New York State and across the northeastern United States.¹¹ Breeding bird and oceanic fish population ranges in the State have shifted northward over the last several decades. Sea levels along New York's coast have risen more than a foot since 1900. According to some models average sea levels along New York's coast are expected to rise as much as 2.5 feet above the averages seen from 2000 to 2004 by 2050. Additionally, modeling has predicted that New York is likely to experience increased and more variable or inconsistent precipitation. These impacts, along with many others, have altered and will continue to alter the balance within natural ecosystems and landscapes across the State.

The Town of New Castle recognizes the ways in which climate change can adversely affect the community and has acknowledged that the Town has a role to play in mitigating against and adapting to the impacts of climate change. In 2011, the Town Board adopted the Climate Action Plan (CAP), acknowledging this responsibility and the environmental and economic benefits that come along with addressing the issues associated with a changing climate. The CAP was adopted with the goals of increasing energy efficiency, increasing the use of renewable energy sources, reducing vehicle miles traveled, and reducing the generation of solid waste. Since the adoption of the CAP, the Town has partnered with New York State and other localities in running programs and adopting policies that reduce municipal and community energy use and greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. In December of 2016, New Castle became a Clean Energy Community, earning the opportunity to utilize \$100,000 in State funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in the Town. As a reflection of today's best practices in sustainable planning, this Plan establishes policies that will enable New Castle to continue to mitigate the effects of global climate change by further embracing energy efficiency, renewable energy, green building and green infrastructure practices. This will include updating the Town's CAP and setting new municipal GHG emission reduction goals.

Environmental Legislation

The TDP acknowledged that New Castle was already largely developed and stated that many of the major decisions affecting the Town's natural resources had already been made¹². The policies set forth in the TDP regarding the Town's environmental features had largely to do with the conservation of undeveloped land and the protection of sensitive resources and environmental features that remained untouched at

¹¹ <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/94702.html>

¹² 1989 Town Development Plan, page 17

the time. Since the writing of the TDP, many revisions were made to the Town Code for the purpose of environmental protection:

- Chapter 108: Steep Slope Protection was added to the code in 1992 to safeguard the Town's sensitive terrain and vegetation, as well as to prevent flooding and maintain important scenic views and vistas.
- Chapter 108A: Stormwater Management and Erosion and Sediment Control (2007) and Chapter 108B: Illegal Discharges and Illicit Connections (2007) were included to better manage stormwater runoff, prevent surface erosion, and mitigate pollution of groundwater.
- Chapter 70: Flood Damage Prevention was adopted in 2007 to protect floodplains and prevent property damage during flooding events.
- The Town's wetlands protection law (1979) was repealed in 1990 and replaced by the current Chapter 137: Wetlands, which strictly regulates development within 100 feet of any wetland areas.
- In 2002, the Town established an Environmental Protection Overlay district which expanded the width of the wetland buffer established in Chapter 137 (from 100 feet to 150 feet) on lands located in the eastern and western ends of the Town.

Harmony with Nature Goals

The environmental protection measures built into New Castle's Town Code have helped maintain the environmental health and scenic beauty of the Town as the Town has continued to face development pressures. The implementation of this plan will produce policies that supplement those already in effect. Goals have been set forth in Chapter 1, *Livable Built Environment*, to promote the establishment of sustainable land use strategies that will help channel new development away from environmentally sensitive areas, toward areas where there is already a concentration of development supported by existing infrastructure. Goals established in this chapter will help strengthen the Town's environmental regulations where necessary with a focus on the preservation of the Town's natural resources.

Goal 15. Protect and maintain the Town's environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources.

The Town's environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources include its wetlands, wildlife, open space corridors, steep slopes, watersheds, rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, trees and forests, flood plains, aquifers (potable and non-potable), special rock outcrops, view sheds/scenic vistas and ridgelines. The Environmental Protection Overlay regulations and environmental review process should be reviewed and strengthened, where necessary. The Town should revisit its code provisions for the off-site mitigation of environmental impacts, including wetland disturbance and tree cutting, with the objective of minimizing the transformation of our habitat, forest and wetlands and allowing for flexibility in the location of mitigation efforts (e.g. off-site but with a higher mitigation factor) and type of mitigation plantings (e.g. shrubs should be allowed to replace trees where appropriate). The creation of aquifer overlay districts should be

considered. Education materials should be provided for the public and land developers regarding the ecological impact of development, the permitting process and mitigation requirements

Goal 16. Promote plant and animal biodiversity through the restoration, connection and protection of natural habitats.

The Town should develop a Natural Resources Index (NRI) that inventories and maps different flora and fauna, as well as their respective habitats. This information should be used in a Town-wide Biodiversity Management Plan, which should outline a more systematic approach to support and protect biodiversity. If appropriate, code modifications should be made to help manage and protect these species and habitats. A Town-wide NRI and Biodiversity Plan can be developed in partnership with neighboring municipalities, the NYSDEC, and other local environmental organizations, and as a result, can help strengthen inter-municipal biodiversity protection efforts.

Goal 17. Manage and reduce the impacts of dangerous and/or invasive plants and animals (e.g. deer, coyotes, vines).

Invasive plants and animals are incredibly disruptive to native species habitats and ecosystems, greatly contribute to a loss of biodiversity, and can often be a nuisance to human populations. The Town should identify invasive plants and animals, as well as their impact on local habitats, and develop a plan to reduce those impacts. Residents should be provided with educational materials that address the control of vines and invasive plants and the Town should continue to disseminate information found in the Town's Coyote Response Plan to help residents understand coyote behavior and enhance awareness of safety techniques.

Goal 18. Protect and manage open spaces and undeveloped lands.

In 1998, the Town completed an open space inventory and plan that identified and evaluated the Town's remaining open spaces and the potential for linking existing open space parcels located throughout the Town. The Town should update the open space inventory and develop an Open Space Management Policy (OSMP) to maintain and seek to expand areas of open space quality, Town parks and preserves, and biotic corridors. The update should also examine and map how the Town's open spaces connect with open spaces in neighboring towns that abut New Castle. The OSMP should be updated in close coordination with the development of an NRI/Biodiversity Management Plan and the update of the Town's Recreation and Parks Master Plan and Trail Development Master Plan. Locally significant view sheds/scenic vistas should be identified and mapped and included in the Plan, and if appropriate, regulations for the protection of view sheds/scenic vistas should be codified.

Goal 19. Mitigate the negative impacts of stormwater runoff and plan for a lasting potable water supply.

The Town should require that all new developments include green infrastructure (GI) features, which not only help to reduce flooding and offset stormwater loading on existing drainage

infrastructure, but also help to facilitate a natural filtration process and improve water quality. The Town should create incentives (e.g. additional density, reduced parking) for retrofitting existing developments to include GI features. Where appropriate, development on Town-owned property should include them as well. The Town should also require applicants to assess how their project could impact stormwater runoff flow into nearby water courses, pipe networks and properties. These hydrologic and hydraulic analyses should include water quality (i.e. chemical composition) and quantity (i.e. peak flows and volume) provisions. In order to plan for a lasting and sustainable water supply, the Town should consider conducting a Town-wide or targeted area aquifer study to assess the quantity and quality of groundwater and should look to expand the Town's public water supply system where practicable.

Goal 20. Encourage water conservation and reuse.

The Town of New Castle's favorable geographic location within the Hudson River Valley makes it rich with water. However, it is still important that the Town and its residents use water resources intelligently. Projected impacts of climate change in New York State include an increase in frequency of short-term droughts "with weeks of dry conditions punctuated by rains too intense for parched soils to absorb."¹³ Water conservation measures such as adjusting the timing of outdoor sprinkler systems or installation of low-flow shower heads can help to conserve water in dry summer months, or when a "short-term drought" lasts longer than expected. To encourage water conservation, a Town-wide water conservation and reuse program should be established, and Town operations should be examined to assess where water can be reused. The Town should encourage xeriscaping (landscaping that requires little to no irrigation) and alternative graywater and rainwater use/reuse through research and education.

Goal 21. Ensure the sustainability/resiliency of infrastructure.

Maximizing the efficiency of infrastructure can help to make infrastructure more resilient. The Town should adopt codes or design standards for new public infrastructure that will increase energy and water efficiency, if applicable. The Town should also develop targeted strategies and make specific upgrades to public infrastructure systems to improve resource efficiency. In many cases, this will mean enhancing data collection and monitoring of the infrastructure through the use of smart technology (e.g. installing web-enabled sensors at critical manholes to continually gage water flow, installing smart water meters). Lastly, the Town should develop training programs for infrastructure operators on energy and water efficiency techniques that can be incorporated into their daily activities and operations.

¹³ DEC (<http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/94702.html>)

Goal 22. Ensure sustainable construction and design of buildings to minimize their environmental impact throughout their lifecycle.

The way in which a building is designed, constructed, operated and maintained determines its impact on the natural environment, as well as on the building's occupants, for its entire lifecycle. Green buildings are designed and operated to be resource-efficient, to generate less waste and pollution, and to serve as healthy environments for occupants. Green buildings can also provide economic benefits (e.g. reduced energy costs, higher home values) well into the future. Buildings in New Castle should be as high-performing and as sustainable as possible. The Town's existing green building code, which can be found within Chapter 74 of the Town Code, should be examined to ensure it reflects the best practices in materials, building systems, and operations, to the extent practicable. The Town should consider adopting a stretch code that requires more rigorous energy regulations for newly constructed and existing buildings that have been renovated than the base energy code. Educational material regarding the benefits of green building practices should be developed to promote sustainable construction.

Goal 23. Promote proper maintenance and sustainability of wastewater disposal systems.

A majority of residential properties in the Town are not sewerred and rely on subsurface sewage disposal (septic) systems for wastewater disposal. It is critical to ensure that septic systems are properly maintained so that they do not negatively impact soils and water quality (ground and surface water). The Westchester County Department of Health permits and regulates septic systems. The Town of New Castle should promote proper use and maintenance of septic systems through its website, annual Town-wide mailing and other means. The Town should work with Westchester County and the Northern Westchester Watershed Committee to establish a program to repair or replace failing and substandard septic systems.

Goal 24. Reduce pollution from buildings, transportation, commerce and human activity.

The Town of New Castle considers air, light, noise and odor impacts associated with new development. Existing codes should be revised so that they are in keeping with best environmental practices. In addition, the Town should develop innovative outreach efforts to educate the public on the existence of pollutants in the environment, their source, and what role residents can play in decreasing pollution. Topics should include greenhouse gas emissions; energy efficiency and renewable energy; septic system maintenance; proper use and disposal of pesticides, detergents and other household chemicals; and resource conservation.

Goal 25. Reduce the Town's carbon footprint, encourage climate change adaptation measures, minimize energy demand and promote the use of alternative energy.

Local municipalities are susceptible to climate change, but also have a unique opportunity to both mitigate and adapt to its effects. Mitigation measures are those that decrease a community's greenhouse gas emissions and carbon footprint. These measures, which span from smart land use

to energy efficiency techniques to renewable energy installations, will decrease long term spending, enhance the resiliency of all infrastructure and have a net positive impact on the environment. The Town should update its Climate Action Plan, set new greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction goals, and consider investments in renewable energy installations, energy efficiency retrofits, and other alterations in Town operations to reduce GHG pollution. The Town should consider pursuing certification as a Climate Smart Community through the DEC to become eligible for funding to aid in these endeavors.

Chapter 3: Resilient Economy

A community's economy comprises all of the economic activity that both supports and relies upon the livelihoods of its residential population. A strong economy depends on continual local investment and active production and consumption of goods and services. A community with a Resilient Economy is prepared to deal with both positive and negative changes in its economic health as a result of unforeseen circumstances or external events. To build a Resilient Economy, a community must maximize reliance on local assets so as to lessen the negative impact of uncontrollable external economic forces through careful, flexible and creative development. Indicators of a Resilient Economy include thriving businesses and commercial areas, the capacity of a municipal government to provide public services and make necessary infrastructural updates, balanced and sustainable land use and development patterns, and strong disaster recovery processes.

Over the past few decades, New Castle's economy has fared well through changes in the political, financial, environmental and cultural climates, as well as through a number of notable and isolated events. Overall, the community has recovered financially from the economic impacts of the 2008 financial crisis, the September 11th terrorist attacks, and Superstorms Irene, Floyd, and Sandy, to name a few examples. This chapter establishes goals that will enable New Castle to strengthen its economy through development of local assets and place-based, sustainable revitalization.

Fiscal Condition

New Castle's fiscal position has remained strong over the last twenty-five years, weathering the Dotcom Market Crash in 2000-2001 and the 2008 global financial crisis. As evidence of the Town's robust financial position in 2017, Moody's recently reaffirmed the Town's long standing AAA bond rating. Positive demographic factors including a per capita income of \$89,919, as well as a county wide unemployment rate below 4%, contribute to annual property tax collection rates in excess of 99%. Despite a fluctuating economy, and the constraints of the state mandated tax cap, the Town continues to maintain a strong cash position over the last five years, growing its available fund balance to over 30% of operating revenues. The Town's annual debt service is below 7% of the total budget, and just over 2.5% of the statutory limit meaning the town has ample means to continue funding its capital improvement plan. Recent data from the New Castle Tax Assessor's Office shows property values are once again rising after a stagnant period due to the global economic downturn. Residential property taxes comprised more than 91% of total property tax revenue collected in New Castle, while commercial property taxes made up 3%.¹⁴ This breakdown of tax revenue is to be expected, as a vast majority of land in the Town is zoned for and used as residential property; 98% of land area in New Castle falls within a residential zoning district, and 56% of the Town's acreage is comprised of residential uses. Commercial, office and industrial zones and uses comprise 2% of the Town's land area.¹⁵ The Town of New Castle's strong bond rating, ample

¹⁴ Town Board meeting minutes, 12/18/14

¹⁵ Numbers were calculated using zoning acreages in the County Base Studies. This number does not include the OPROD; however, its inclusion would not make a significant difference.

reserves, and significant debt capacity allow funding for vital infrastructure improvement, and social programs that enhance residents’ quality of life and support economic activity in the Town.

Employment and Workforce

The Town’s major employers and hamlets serve as New Castle’s “centers of economic activity.” Aside from the departure of Reader’s Digest (see discussion below), not much has changed insofar as employment opportunities in New Castle over the past few decades. This is largely due to the recognition that New Castle is mainly considered a “bedroom” community with a 55 minute train ride to New York City and close proximity to the business centers of White Plains, NY and Stamford, CT. Further, this fact is emphasized with the small number of employers and jobs contained within the Town’s borders. In 2013, there were a total of 4,553 primary jobs in New Castle, a majority of which were in the retail trade (27%) and educational services (17%) sectors. Between 5% and 7% of jobs were found in accommodation and food services; administration and support, waste management, and remediation; construction; health care and social services; management of companies and enterprises; and professional, scientific, and technical services.¹⁶ According to the 2013 New Castle Financial Reports, New Castle’s top six employers accounted for 11.64% of the labor force. New Castle’s largest employer was the Chappaqua Central School District, with 375 employees, accounting for 4.40% of total employment. The Chappaqua Bus Company employed 200 people, accounting for 2.35% of employment. Wagon Road Camp employed 150 people, or 1.76%, the Town of New Castle employed 112 people, or 1.31%, and World Cup Schools employed 85 people, or 1% of the labor force.

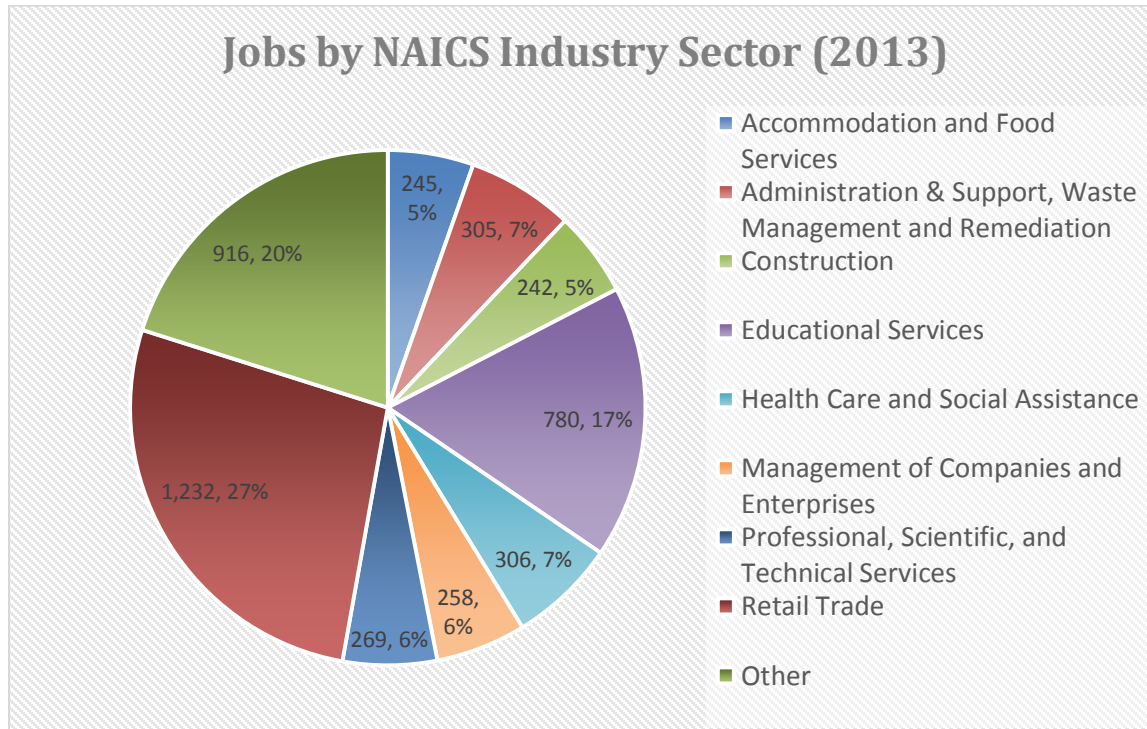


Figure 1: US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics-Origin Destination Employment Statistics

¹⁶ US Census Bureau, Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics-Origin Destination Employment Statistics

The Town's location along Metro North Railroad's Harlem line, the Saw Mill River and Taconic Parkway, and State Routes 120, 117, and 133 provides those employed within the Town easy train and vehicle access to their places of work. The majority of residents who commute to White Plains or New York City by train enjoy an average transport time of twenty or fifty-five minutes, respectively. Even given increased trends in telecommuting, economic activity within the Town is dependent on these transportation connections. In Chapter 1, *Livable Built Environment*, this Plan establishes goals to maintain and improve these connections, enhance bus reliability and explore the feasibility of alternative transport opportunities such as self-driving vehicles, bike and pedestrian pathways. New Castle's transportation network is paramount to providing the Town's workforce with reliable access to their places of employment and entertainment.

From 1995 to 2015, according to Gallup's annual Work and Education poll, the percentage of U.S. workers who say they have telecommuted to their jobs vaulted from 9 to 37 percent. The overall average is a modest two days per month, increasing to six days. *GlobalWorkplaceAnalytics.com* reports that regular work-at-home has grown 103 percent since 2005, and 6.5 percent in 2014. The latter is the largest year-over-year increase since before the recession. This means that 3.7 million employees (2.5 percent of the workforce) now (2015) work from home at least half of the time.

New Castle Hamlets

The majority of economic activity in New Castle takes place in the Town's hamlets, Chappaqua and Millwood. At the writing of the TDP, it was well-known and accepted that the Town's residents patronized the commercial areas of surrounding municipalities, both because of convenience and to supplement the goods and services offered within the Town's hamlets. For this reason, the TDP did not encourage additional commercial development in the hamlets or an expansion of hamlet boundaries. The TDP also recommended against further commercial development in the hamlets because it would create unmanageable parking demand in the Chappaqua hamlet and have the potential to conflict with the residential feel of the rest of the Town. This policy has helped to shape the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets as we know them today.

Chappaqua and Millwood have served as hubs of community and commercial activity for decades. Longtime community businesses such as the Chappaqua Village Market, Lange's, Family Britches, Susan Lawrence, Petticoat Lane, Drug Mart and Rocky's serve loyal customer bases. The Bagel Emporium,



Image 1 – Chappaqua Hamlet along South Greeley Avenue. Source: Wall Street Journal.

Chappaqua Station, and Tazza Café burst with activity during morning rush hours. Residents gather to participate in community movie nights and concerts, sporting competitions, camps and fundraising events held at the Rec Field and Millwood Park during the spring, summer and fall months. Annual sidewalk sales and farmer’s markets provide time for community members to come together, get to know local merchants and support local businesses. During warm weather seasons, outdoor seating at Le Jardin Du Roi and Susan Lawrence quickly fill to capacity at meal times; the North County Trailway bustles with cyclists and joggers; and children can be seen playing on the Bell School and Gedney Park playgrounds and in Millwood Park.

While there is much that residents cherish about the hamlets, there are many ways in which Chappaqua and Millwood would benefit from economic revitalization efforts. Overall economic performance of the Town’s businesses is difficult to assess because the Town does not have access to the financial information of private business



Image 2 - Millwood Hamlet along Route 133. Source: Street Advisor.

owners. However, focus group discussions with the business community suggest that a limited customer base has made it challenging for businesses to achieve their profit goals. Additionally, recent economic studies have indicated that retail capture rates for both hamlets are low, and for most types of retail there is an “outflow” of Town residents’ consumer spending to the commercial areas of other municipalities¹⁷ “Outflow” to internet shopping is also a considerable factor which is growing at a rapid pace.

Policies found within the TDP were supportive of this kind of pattern. Today, however, this policy has become an obstacle to the economic vitality of the Town’s hamlets. Furthermore, the advent of the Internet and the convenience of online shopping have revolutionized the consumer industry. To make any sort of retail purchase in 1989, one would almost definitely need to leave the house. Today, online megavendors like Amazon, Peapod and Zappos make it easy to purchase all types of goods, including perishables, with direct delivery, eliminating the need to patronize businesses in person. E-commerce has contributed greatly to the “outflow” of resident spending, and has helped to transform the American “downtown”. New

Part of developing dependable local assets will mean attracting businesses that provide services that enhance the sustainability of the Town and will cater to future residential needs. This Plan includes an action to attract “green” businesses, or businesses in the renewable energy, energy efficiency and green infrastructure industries.

¹⁷ See “Chappaqua Crossing Competitive Effects Analysis,” AKRF, 2013

strategies need to be adopted in order for local businesses to remain relevant and successful in this new market.

It is within this context that this Plan establishes goals to help support local business and create thriving, 21st century hamlets. A community with a Resilient Economy has strong, dependable local assets, which includes healthy local businesses. In Chappaqua and Millwood, commercial, civic and community activity are co-dependent. This Plan establishes policies that will help ensure the hamlets' built environment and land use regulations encourage a vibrant civic, cultural and community atmosphere that works in symbiosis with local economic activity.

This Plan establishes the goal to create a sustainable mix of residential and commercial uses within the hamlets, or mixed-use infill development. Such development will help satisfy the community's varied housing needs while also helping to stimulate economic activity. Carefully planned mixed-use development in the hamlets including provisions to address parking supply will allow for further integration of residential and commercial uses, providing business establishments with a consistent, built-in consumer base that does not require the use of a vehicle to do their shopping. In order to support a substantial residential population in the hamlets, businesses should be tailored to serve the needs of and provide for those

During the Comprehensive Plan outreach workshops, residents expressed their desire for vibrant, thriving hamlets. Residents want more diverse retail, food and service establishments, as well as attractions and destinations that will bring them to the hamlets. Residents appreciate the hamlets' local businesses and do not want chain, fast food, big-box establishments in the hamlets. They recognize the importance of mixed-use infill development and the integration of housing units in the commercial areas. They want enhanced walkability and comfortable, attractive gathering spaces.

populations. In addition, there must be other retail, entertainment and civic opportunities and destinations within the Town to attract populations from outside the hamlets. This Plan sets forth actions to explore opportunities to diversify the retail, entertainment, and civic destination mix in Chappaqua and Millwood, as well as to stimulate patronage and activity. As identified in the public outreach sessions parking supply is of paramount concern in the Chappaqua hamlet. Parking should be located in proximity to businesses and other amenities to accommodate patrons who drive downtown and are a vital part of the customer base for local merchants.

This Plan also establishes policies to create vibrant and walkable mixed-use areas in the hamlets that are well connected to public transit. Pedestrian-friendly circulation networks within hamlets that connect business establishments, housing, institutions, green spaces and public meeting places help to create an atmosphere where patrons are able and likely to gather. As of early 2017, sidewalks line Greeley Avenue and King Street in Chappaqua, but they are undersized and in disrepair. Chappaqua also would benefit from an increased number of crosswalks to make it easier for pedestrians to navigate the hamlet. Millwood's commercial clusters are disjointed and the Millwood Shopping Center is setback from Station Road, making its parking lot the centerpiece of the hamlet. While the Metro North Harlem Line runs through the Chappaqua hamlet and Millwood boasts prime access to the North County Trailway, both of the hamlets lack sufficient and welcoming pedestrian networks to connect these invaluable transportation

amenities to the commercial centers of each hamlet and the rest of the community. Much more can be done to entice those coming off the train or using the bike path to patronize the business establishments of the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets. Additionally, improving pedestrian amenities and sidewalk infrastructure along Chappaqua’s mid-King Street area and Station Place in Millwood would help to strengthen commercial and residential uses along these corridors and connect retail nodes within each of the hamlets.

This Plan also establishes the goal to enhance the aesthetic quality of the hamlets. Both the Millwood and Chappaqua hamlets lack a coordinated, attractive aesthetic. While design guidelines for the Millwood Hamlet were developed in 1993 and revised in 1999, design guidelines were never developed for Chappaqua. It is questionable as to whether Millwood’s design guidelines can achieve their underlying goals given the infrastructure limitations in the hamlet. This Plan recommends revising Millwood’s existing design guidelines and creating design guidelines for Chappaqua that are attainable, promote aesthetic continuity and incorporate sustainable planning concepts.

Currently, an infrastructure and streetscape revitalization project in the Chappaqua hamlet is underway. The project will consist of sewer, water (drinking) pipe upgrades/replacement and stormwater infrastructure improvements as well as streetscape improvements consisting of sidewalks, landscaping, lighting, and traffic and pedestrian improvements. The changes being planned for are in alignment with the goals established in this Plan. The project is currently in the design phase with construction anticipated to begin in 2017.

Chappaqua Crossing

While the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets exist today within borders that were outlined in the TDP, there has been some change in regards to the commercial composition of the Town since 1989. At the time and as discussed in the TDP, there were two other properties in New Castle zoned for business and office use: a large property owned by IBM off of Croton Dam Road, and the Reader’s Digest campus sandwiched between the Saw Mill River Parkway and Route 117. IBM did not end up constructing any facilities on their property. In 1997, IBM sold its property to Westchester County. Today it is Hudson Hills, a public golf course. In 2004, Reader’s Digest sold its property to a private developer, Summit Greenfield, and by December 2010, had vacated the campus completely. Other tenants filled some of the 700,000 square feet of office space available on the campus, but large portions of the property remained underutilized.

After acquiring the Reader’s Digest property, now known as Chappaqua Crossing, Summit Greenfield presented the Town Board with various redevelopment scenarios for the site, which included retail and multi-family residential uses. At the time, Chappaqua Crossing was not zoned for such development; it was, and continues to be, the only property within the Town zoned B-RO-20, for research office and business use.

Recognizing the chronically high vacancy rates on the property and the need for new and varied housing options within the community, and following the closure of the D’Agostinos grocery store in the Chappaqua hamlet, the New Castle Town Board entertained the possibility of permitting retail uses at Chappaqua Crossing, anchored by a full-service grocery store. After much deliberation and study, in December of 2014, the Town Board established the Office Park Retail Overlay District (OPROD) zoning classification. The OPROD allows the establishment of retail uses within the B-RO-20 zoning district. The Town Board also approved a Multi-Family Planned Development (MFPD) zoning district on the property to allow for the development of multifamily housing units. The Town Board has also approved preliminary development concept plans, including design guidelines, for the retail and residential development of Chappaqua Crossing. In total, the 113.7-acre site will host 500,000 square feet of office space; 120,000 square feet of retail space, including a 40,000-square-foot grocer and 40,000-square-foot fitness facility; 64 units of mixed-income housing (i.e., affordable, workforce and market rate units); and an additional 91 townhomes. It is important to note, however, that the mixed-use Chappaqua Crossing campus was not intended or designed to become a hamlet like the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets. The addition of retail and residential uses at Chappaqua Crossing was driven by the need to reevaluate the role of this unique property in the community in light of its diminished use and obsolescence as a single occupant corporate campus. For planning and zoning purposes, Chappaqua Crossing should not be treated as a third hamlet, particularly with respect to the established residential areas surrounding the property. Doing so would be inconsistent with the policies and goals set forth in this Plan.



Map 2 - Source: New Castle GIS, Westchester County GIS

of mixed-income housing (i.e., affordable, workforce and market rate units); and an additional 91 townhomes. It is important to note, however, that the mixed-use Chappaqua Crossing campus was not intended or designed to become a hamlet like the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets. The addition of retail and residential uses at Chappaqua Crossing was driven by the need to reevaluate the role of this unique property in the community in light of its diminished use and obsolescence as a single occupant corporate campus. For planning and zoning purposes, Chappaqua Crossing should not be treated as a third hamlet, particularly with respect to the established residential areas surrounding the property. Doing so would be inconsistent with the policies and goals set forth in this Plan.

To help ensure that that the new retail and other development at the Chappaqua Crossing campus does not divert substantial business activity and related pedestrian traffic away from the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets, the Town Board imposed a number of conditions upon the developer to help ensure that Chappaqua Crossing complements the Town’s hamlets. For example, limitations related to the size

of buildings and type of stores were carefully defined in the OPROD. The developers plan to construct kiosks on their property advertising businesses in the hamlets and will facilitate jitney service between Chappaqua Crossing and the Chappaqua hamlet. This Plan establishes the goal to continue to examine ways to enable the hamlets and the mixed-use commercial and residential uses at Chappaqua Crossing to thrive individually and complement one another so that the provision of civic, retail and commercial services for Town residents is balanced and coordinated.

Economic Preparedness and Resiliency

As discussed in Chapter 2: Harmony with Nature, a variety of climate change impacts have been observed and recorded in New York State. Extreme storms have the potential to become more frequent and intense. Hurricane Floyd (1999), Hurricane Irene (2011) and Hurricane Sandy (2012) resulted in costly damage across New Castle. A Resilient Economy enables a community to withstand and recover from unexpected emergencies and natural disasters. The Town of New Castle has established an Emergency/Disaster Operating Procedures Emergency Plan which sets forth a coordinated, thorough and appropriate response to an emergency. This Plan sets forth a goal to ensure economic preparedness is included in emergency planning in New Castle (see Chapter 4: Healthy Community).

While it remains vitally important to maintain the Town's bucolic character, New Castle residents desire thriving and vibrant commercial areas where businesses are well supported and provide a variety of goods and services. This chapter sets forth goals that will supplement those established in Chapter 1: Livable Built Environment, which promote the development of additional and varied housing in the hamlets, with an added focus on the enhancement of the economic potential of current and future businesses in each of the Town's commercial areas. Goals to revitalize hamlet landscapes to cater to pedestrians and promote sustainable, mixed-use development are established for the purpose of providing physical capacity for healthy local businesses and a welcoming atmosphere for patrons.

Redevelopment studies for the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets have begun. When complete these studies will set forth varying land use scenarios that cater to residents' visions for both hamlets and help to accomplish the goals established in this Plan. The studies suggest infill development on properties that are publically owned or underutilized as well as measures to enhance accessibility, walkability and aesthetics in the commercial areas. These studies will be revisited following the adoption of this Comprehensive Plan.

Resilient Economy Goals

Goal 26. Create a sustainable mix of commercial and residential uses within the hamlets

A "sustainable mix of commercial and residential uses" refers to the balance of both of these uses in the hamlets so that one supports the other. Increased opportunities for housing in the hamlets would not only provide businesses with a built-in customer base, it would also provide residents

with immediate access to the hamlet’s amenities, services and transportation opportunities. Commercial, retail and business establishments should enable Town residents to fulfill their daily needs, and should include the provision of leisure and entertainment opportunities. An analysis of development and infill opportunities within each of the existing hamlets should be performed with consideration of environmental and infrastructural conditions and constraints, community needs and the public vision as established in this Comprehensive Plan. Existing zoning should be examined and revised to better facilitate the revitalization of the hamlets. As part of the revitalization, additional parking should be provided in the Chappaqua hamlet in proximity to businesses and amenities.

Goal 27. Create vibrant and walkable mixed-use areas in the hamlets that are well connected to public transit.

Hamlet streetscapes should be designed for use by and catered towards pedestrians to encourage gathering, interacting and shop patronage. The hamlets should be made as walkable as possible and streetscapes should favor walking over driving. To do this, smart growth principles should be included in the development of hamlet design guidelines. The Town should complete capital improvement projects or develop design standards that would enhance the pedestrian experience and walking opportunities between the major public transportation amenities (i.e. Metro North, the North County Trailway) and the commercial centers of each hamlet. These “pedestrian promenades” should feature greenery and welcoming open space. The Town should also explore opportunities to beautify and enhance the comfort of bus stops. The Town should also examine opportunities to revitalize or rezone mid-King Street and Station Place so as to better connect the commercial nodes in the Chappaqua and Millwood hamlets and the mixed-use commercial and residential uses at Chappaqua Crossing.

Goal 28. Enhance the aesthetic quality of the hamlets.

Design guidelines should be developed for the Chappaqua hamlet, and the design guidelines established for the Millwood hamlet in 1993 (and revised in 1999) should be updated, if necessary. Guidelines should utilize LEED-ND standards or other sustainable design practices for signage, street frontage, windows, awnings, building color and materials, and street architecture. In addition, the feasibility of creating a maintenance district in the hamlets for both aesthetic and infrastructural upkeep should be assessed.

Goal 29. Attract, retain and support diverse, local businesses and establishments.

The Town should develop a coordinated marketing campaign to promote the hamlets to potential tenants and vendors. The Town should engage consultants to assess the potential impacts of e-commerce to our hamlet businesses, provide a strategy to reposition our hamlets as destinations in this new competitive environment, and set a strategy for implementation. Existing property owners should be provided with informational materials and guidance when looking to attract

new tenants or retrofit their buildings. Incentives should be created to both attract new, local businesses and retain those that exist. New businesses should be provided with a Town “Welcome Package” that includes a warm welcome message and important contact information (e.g. Development Department, Chamber of Commerce, neighboring businesses). As renewable energy, energy efficiency and green infrastructure industries and businesses grow in the region, the Town should consider attracting these and other businesses to the hamlets.

Goal 30. Stimulate patronage and activity in the hamlets and at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center (Wallace Auditorium).

The Town should form a task force that works with existing community groups (e.g. Art Under the Bridge) to develop events that showcase the Town’s unique character and stimulate patronage of local businesses. Particular attention should be given to scheduling recreational programming in and near the hamlets on nights and weekends. The Town should work with local businesses and the Chamber of Commerce to promote business hours which complement recreational activities and Town-sponsored events.

Goal 31. Promote complementary development between the hamlets.

To ensure that the Chappaqua and Millwood Hamlets thrive individually while complementing one another, the Town should investigate opportunities to develop public transit connections between the two hamlets. The Town should also encourage businesses to offer consumer benefits by partnering with businesses from other hamlets.

Chapter 4: Healthy Community

A Healthy Community recognizes and addresses public health and safety needs through the provision of recreational opportunities, healthcare and social services to its residents. As a Healthy Community, the Town of New Castle provides services and programs to improve the health of residents and that facilitate resident safety both in times of normalcy and emergency. Policies established in this chapter will strengthen these provisions and help the Town navigate obstacles to ensuring public health and safety.

Open Space and Recreation

A large component of a healthy community is the provision of open space and recreation. In New Castle, the open space and recreational amenities are highly utilized and valued by Town residents. Of the Town’s 4,418 acres¹⁸ accounted for by open space and recreational uses, publicly owned parks and open space account for 1,570 acres, providing almost 0.1 acre per resident. Including school properties, publicly owned open space accounts for 1,762 acres. With the exception of the Hudson Hills Golf Course, which is managed by Westchester County, the community’s publicly owned, active use parklands are maintained either by the Town of New Castle or the Chappaqua Central School District. Publicly owned, passive use parks and preserves are open to the public for hiking, walking and nature observation, and are managed by a variety of stewards including the Town, adjacent municipalities, Westchester County and New York State. A complete list of these parks and their uses can be found below in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Publicly Owned Recreational Lands.

Ownership	Name	Acres	Use
Town Parks and Open Space	Amsterdam Park	11	Active, Passive
	Burden Preserve	128	Passive
	Gedney Park	126	Active, Passive
	Glazer Arboretum	69	Passive
	Lois Place Park	3	Passive
	Millwood Park	6	Active
	Recreation Field	6	Active
	Smith Park	2	Active
	Sunny Ridge Preserve	82	Passive
	Turner Swamp Sanctuary	35	Passive
	Warburg Park	78	Passive
	Whippoorwill Park	209	Passive
County Parks and Parkway Lands	Briarcliff Peekskill Trailway*	124	Passive
	Hudson Hills Golf Course	150	Active
	Merestead*	9	Passive
	North County Trailway*	27	Passive

¹⁸ This acreage was calculated using the DEC’s definition of open space. See Chapter 2: Harmony with Nature.

	Wampus Pond Park*	25	Passive
State Parks and Parkway Lands	Old Croton Aqueduct State Park*	1	Passive
	Saw Mill River Parkway Right-of-Way*	297	Passive
	Taconic State Parkway Right-of-Way*	182	Passive
	School		
	Douglas Grafflin Elementary School	12	Active, Passive
	Horace Greeley High School	49	Active, Passive
	Roaring Brook Elementary School	26	Active, Passive
	Robert E. Bell Middle School	12	Active
	Seven Bridges Middle School	41	Active, Passive
	Westorcharad Elementary School	52	Active, Passive
	TOTAL	1762	

(*) properties lie only partially within New Castle. The acreage given represents the portion of the property within New Castle. Source: Westchester County Base Studies, New Castle Department of Recreation and Parks

Privately held camping and hiking grounds, nature preserves and recreational clubs provide residents additional recreational opportunities and access to the Town’s natural assets. Campgrounds include the Wagon Road Camp (51.84 acres), the Girl Scout Reservation (71.35 acres in New Castle). The 230 acre Campfire Club of America (151.33 acres in New Castle) is used for retreats and hunting. Within the Town there are two privately-owned golf courses along with four swim and tennis clubs¹⁹. A list of privately owned recreational lands and their uses are listed in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Privately Owned Recreational Lands

Ownership	Name	Acres	Use
Nature Preserves	Brooklyn Botanical Garden	19	Passive
	Cameron Murtfeldt Audobon Sanctuary	7	Passive
	Choate Preserve	25	Passive
	Haas Audobon Sanctuary	14	Passive
	Marsh Memorial Sanctuary*	34	Passive
	Meyer Preserve*	13	Passive
	Pinecliff Audobon Sanctuary	15	Passive
	Pruyn Audobon Sanctuary	92	Passive
	Teatown Lake Reservation*	39	Passive
Private Recreation	Birchwood Swim Club	30	Active, Passive
	Campfire Club of America*	151	Passive
	Chappaqua Swim and Tennis Club	11	Active, Passive
	Girl Scout Reservation*	71	Passive
	Mount Kisco Country Club*	61	Active
	Seven Bridges Field Club	6	Active, Passive
	Whippoorwill Club*	73	Active, Passive

¹⁹ The Twin Oaks Swim and Tennis Club, the fifth private recreation club in the Town, was recently sold.

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	Willowbrook Swim Club	16	Active, Passive
Institutional and Public Assembly	Wagon Road Camp	52	Active, Passive
TOTAL		729	

(*) properties lie only partially within New Castle. The acreage given represents the portion of the property within New Castle. Source: Westchester County Base Studies, New Castle Department of Recreation and Parks

In addition to an abundance of parkland and trailways, the Town has a variety of recreational facilities and civic spaces. Town-owned recreational facilities include the Community Center and the Art Center, while the library and other school facilities owned by the Chappaqua Central School District provide residents with open access to playgrounds and various entertainment and recreational opportunities. The Town recently acquired the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center (formerly known as the Wallace Auditorium), located on the multi-use Chappaqua Crossing campus which will be used for civic purposes.

The Chappaqua Central School District has long been an essential partner to the Town in providing recreational opportunities to residents. This Plan acknowledges the long-standing cooperation between the New Castle Recreation and Park’s Department and the School District and supports the continuation and strengthening of this cooperation.

As can be seen in Figure 1, publicly owned recreational lands provide both passive and active recreational opportunities, which are highly utilized and valued by Town residents. In 1989, active recreational amenities were provided for by both publicly owned parklands and privately owned recreational clubs. However, the amenities provided at public parks were different from those provided at private clubs. The TDP suggested that because of the uneven distribution of amenities and projected population growth, the Town would soon have to consider providing facilities typically provided by privately owned clubs to meet the community’s future recreation needs.

A recreational needs assessment was conducted in 1996 and again in 2006, both of which resulted in new Recreation and Parks Master Plans. The 2007 Recreation and Parks Master Plan reported an 80% satisfaction rate among residents with New Castle’s recreational offerings and recommended maintenance and expansion of services based upon demographics and resident feedback. As it has been almost ten years since the completion of the 2007 Recreation and Parks Plan, this Comprehensive Plan has established goals to reassess the community’s recreational needs and expand, enhance and maintain parks and recreational open space, facilities, and programming as necessary. This Plan also establishes goals to ensure equitable access to recreational services, schools and arts and cultural facilities for all residents.

During the Comprehensive Plan outreach process, residents insisted that existing parks and amenities be well-maintained. However, residents have called for park and recreational programming improvements and expansion. Residents have expressed the need for park enhancements such as the improvement of drainage systems and upkeep of sports fields, guidance and signage along trails, and general access provisions. Residents also desire the development of year-round, indoor and outdoor sporting facilities and recreational programming for residents of all ages and abilities, as well as more versatile, accessible playgrounds.

Health and Wellness

A healthy community also promotes the health and wellness of residents. Health and wellness relates to both the physical and social wellbeing of residents. This chapter establishes goals to improve off-road linkages between open space parcels and prominent destinations in the Town, not only to enhance alternative transportation options (sidewalks and trailways) but to encourage physical activity. This Plan also sets forth goals to promote sustainable food practices in Town through the recognition and support of local farmer’s markets, food vendors and community gardens. The Town of New Castle provides a number of social services to its residents, including transportation assistance for seniors. In a Healthy Community, all residents are able to access information regarding available social services (local and regional) and communicate effectively with the Town. This Plan sets forth goals to promote awareness of available social services through a variety of media and improve Town communication channels and response mechanisms.

Community Safety

Residents of New Castle cherish the Town’s reputation as one of the safest communities in New York State. In December of 2015, Safewise.com, a home and community safety rating website, ranked New Castle as the second safest “city” in New York.²⁰ Nonetheless, rare events here and in similarly peaceful and safe towns over the past few years indicate that New Castle must be prepared for incidences of violence or crime regardless of their frequency. New Castle will continue to plan for general public safety and ensure that all public employees and first responders are prepared to handle violent or criminal incidents.

General public safety includes safety on the roads. The TDP reviewed traffic data for a two year period (1985-1987) and found reports for 180 accidents per year. More recently, the Westchester County Base Studies reported a total of 536 accidents between January 2011 and June 2013, which averages out to 214 accidents per year. State Roads in general, and Route 120 specifically, were found to have the highest number of accidents during this time period. Roaring Brook Road had the highest accident count among the Town’s local roads and more recently there have been incidents involving the railroad crossing along this Town roadway. Driver error in judgement was recorded as the cause of a majority (4,400 of the accidents during this time period), while ten accidents were recorded as involving

In February of 2015, a Metro-North commuter train collided with a vehicle stopped on the train tracks at an at-grade railroad crossing near Valhalla. This accident served as a reminder to the entire region of the importance of implementing safety precautions at at-grade railroad crossings. The Town of New Castle has taken this issue seriously and began a railroad crossing safety education campaign following the 2015 accident. The Town will continue to prioritize at-grade railroad crossing safety. This is reflected in the strategies and actions established under the goal of improving road safety, set forth in this chapter.

²⁰ <http://www.safewise.com/blog/safest-cities-new-york-2015/>

pedestrians or bicyclists.²¹This Plan sets forth a goal to improve road safety where topography or other conditions create constraints for drivers and/or pedestrians and bicyclists. Additionally, as discussed in Chapter 1: Livable Built Environment, this Plan suggests developing bike paths and sidewalks on main roads throughout the Town where possible, as this could improve the safety of those who walk and bike along these roads.

Emergency Services

Emergency events and natural disasters also have an effect on the health and safety of New Castle residents. The New Castle Police Department; Chappaqua, Millwood and Mount Kisco Fire Departments; and the Chappaqua, Ossining and Mount Kisco Volunteer Ambulance Corps all provide emergency services to Town residents. Depending upon the nature of each emergency event, police and fire services from surrounding towns provide additional assistance. The Town has an Emergency/Disaster Operating Procedures Plan that establishes the responsibilities of emergency responders and Town decision makers in emergencies, as well as the course of action to take relative to the scale of the emergency event. In times of emergency, the Town operates a rapid emergency alert systems called Code Red and NIXLE which send out critical community alerts such as evacuation notices, boil water notices, and missing child reports. The system is voluntary and alerts residents who have registered to receive alerts through the system.

The Town's All Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed in 2009 and updated in 2015 as part of Westchester County's Hazard Mitigation Plan Update. The plan identifies natural hazards to which the Town is vulnerable, including severe storms and floods, as well as specific flood prone areas throughout the Town. The plan outlines the Town's planning, administrative, technical, fiscal, and regulatory capabilities in dealing with hazards and sets out a hazard mitigation action plan specific to New Castle. Of note, the plan acknowledges that the Town currently does not have a Post Disaster Recovery Plan or Ordinance.

Implementing both mitigation and adaptation measures to deal with and recover from increasingly frequent and intense weather events has never been more important. Chapter 2: Harmony with Nature discussed a variety of climate change impacts that have been observed in New York State and across the northeastern United States.²² According to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), between 1958 and 2010, the amount of precipitation falling in very heavy weather events increased more than 70% in the northeast. While winter snow cover is decreasing, New York is getting more precipitation in the winter and less in the summer. Lastly, the annual average temperature across the state has risen about 2.4 degrees Fahrenheit since 1970 and is expected to continue to rise. All of these factors can lead to major and more frequent natural disasters, as well as other unusual weather patterns (e.g. intense heat waves, temporary droughts) that can disrupt the daily lives and affect the health and safety of Town residents.

²¹ Refer to the Westchester County Base Studies Chapter 5. Transportation, figure 5-15 for a list of accident history on New Castle roadways.

²² <http://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/94702.html>

In November of 2016, the Town established a Community Preparedness Committee (CPC) to assist the Town Board in improving emergency preparedness through legislative action, cross jurisdictional planning, and resident education and training. This Plan sets forth a number of actions the Town should take to support the CPC and more thoroughly prepare for and more easily adapt to these changes in climate, which will include the creation of a Post Disaster Recovery Plan. Furthermore, in the context of the Town's planning for diverse and alternative housing for all types of populations, this Plan establishes goals to help lessen the impacts of emergency situations and natural disasters on more vulnerable populations, or populations that might lack sufficient physical or fiscal abilities to deal with, recover from, or adapt to these situations.

Healthy Community Goals

Goal 32. Increase availability of recreational programming and facilities.

Feedback from residents and the Recreation and Parks Commission during the Comprehensive Plan outreach process suggest that there is a need to increase the availability of recreational programming and facilities in the Town. A formal parkland and facilities demand analysis and a community survey should be conducted to gauge the recreational needs of residents of all ages, socioeconomic statuses and abilities. The 2007 Recreation and Parks Master Plan should then be updated to include the identification of large recreational projects and new recreational programming.

Goal 33. Expand, enhance and maintain parkland and recreational space.

In coordination with a Town-wide Biodiversity Plan and the update of the 2007 Recreation and Parks Master Plan, the Town's Open Space Management Plan (OSMP) should be revised with the intention to expand, enhance and maintain the Town's parkland and recreational space. The Town should explore the development of pocket parks in residential and commercial developments to make open space even more readily available to residents.

Goal 34. Plan for equitable access to recreational services, schools and arts and cultural facilities.

The Town should examine enrollment demographics of recreational programming participants and identify areas of improvement to ensure access to programming is attainable by all residents, no matter age, physical ability, or income level. All Town-owned recreational facilities should be evaluated to ensure they are handicap accessible and ADA compliant. Finally, the Town should continue its open dialogue with the Chappaqua Central School District regarding amenity usage and scheduling.

Goal 35. Improve trail and unimproved linkages between open space parcels and prominent destinations in the Town.

The improvement of off road linkages between open space and prominent destinations in the Town will encourage alternative transportation methods, physical activity, and resident interaction with nature. The Town's Trail Development Master Plan should be updated to identify locations for potential bike paths and walkways between nature areas and parkland and the Town's schools and hamlets. The Town should investigate and implement infrastructure improvements and public outreach efforts that will encourage the use of the North County Trailway in the Millwood hamlet. Finally, signage, guidance and maintenance of existing hiking trails should be improved.

Goal 36. Promote sustainable food practices.

The Town should continue to support year-round farmer's markets. This should include ensuring that a farmer's market takes place in the Town every year during the cold weather season. When necessary, the Town should support the operation of existing and new community gardens. The Town should consider partnering with businesses in the hamlets to establish green roof community gardens.

Goal 37. Provide clear information regarding social services through a variety of media, including both traditional and electronic media.

The Town should keep an inventory of all social, cultural, and institutional services in the Town, as well as nearby food pantries and local healthcare providers. A social services bulletin should be created on the Town's website. The Town should garner feedback from residents regarding their access to social services and assess how access to and provision of these services could be improved.

Goal 38. Improve Town communication channels and feedback mechanisms.

Throughout the Comprehensive Plan outreach process, residents expressed a general dissatisfaction with the Town's communications and were especially critical of the Town's website. To improve the Town's communication with residents and to eliminate barriers to all social services, the Town should evaluate the clarity and effectiveness of the format of its website, mail communications and postings and make necessary improvements.

Goal 39. Improve road safety.

Road improvements should be made at intersections and crossings that have shown high frequency of incidents. Improvements should consider not only vehicular safety, but pedestrian and cyclist safety as well. Complete Street elements should always be considered when making roadway safety improvements. To ensure the safety of vehicles at the highly trafficked Saw Mill

River Parkway entrance at Roaring Brook Road, the Town should pursue the development of a bridge over the MTA Railroad Crossing and the Parkway.

Goal 40. Promote general public safety.

Design elements that reduce injuries and improve public safety should be included in street, building, and landscape capital improvements. Public employees and first responders should be adequately trained for handling and responding to incidences of violence such as bomb threats and shootings. Education materials illustrating “best practice” in public safety behavior should be developed and disseminated via multiple media outlets. Finally, the Town website should be reviewed to ensure emergency information is easily and intuitively accessible.

Goal 41. Promote public safety in natural disasters and emergency situations.

The Town should plan for more frequent and intense weather events by implementing appropriate disaster mitigation and adaptation measures. The Town should develop a Post Disaster Recovery Plan, which should include economic recovery strategies. Mitigation, resiliency and preparedness measures should be included in all local plans and design projects. The Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan should continue to be updated as required and coordinated with ongoing capital and infrastructure improvements. The Town should invest in energy reliability and security and explore the feasibility of community and neighborhood microgrids and combined heat and power (CHP) systems. Finally, the Town should continue to promote safety awareness in all emergencies, including evacuation information in the event of an emergency at Indian Point.

Goal 42. Reduce flooding frequency and intensity in flood-prone areas.

Much of New Castle was built on swamp land before modern day environmental regulations and wetland buffer requirements were established. As a result, there are many areas in New Castle that are prone to flooding despite best efforts in flood prevention or mitigation. It is paramount that the Town continue to be vigilant in implementing flood prevention measures and investigate inventive solutions to flooding. The Town’s Hazard Mitigation Plan should continue to be used to identify drainage improvements and flood prevention projects. The Town’s floodplain management ordinance should be strengthened to reduce vulnerability to flooding and erosion. Finally, the Town’s flood prevention strategies should be aligned with those found in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating system. Formal participation in the Rating System should be considered to ensure New Castle is receiving all appropriate assistance for flood event prevention and recovery.

Goal 43. Mitigate hazards posed by utility poles, wires and infrastructure.

The Town should coordinate with Con Edison and other utility providers to undertake aesthetic and safety improvements of existing above-ground services. Where appropriate, burial of above-ground utility lines should be continued and promoted.

Goal 44. Reduce adverse impacts of environmental hazards or disasters on vulnerable populations.

As variety in the Town's housing stock increases and the baby boomer population ages, the Town could see an increase in "vulnerable" populations, or populations that do not have adequate physical or monetary resources to prepare or adapt sufficiently to environmental hazards or disasters. The Town should identify these vulnerable populations and their need for assistance during and after natural disasters, or as the result of changes in the environment. The Town should develop an inventory of available Federal, State, and local assistance programs for disaster recovery for use by all residents.

Chapter 5: Responsible Regionalism

The Town of New Castle shares a border with eight towns and one village. The community is geographically positioned in close proximity to New York City and being one of 45 municipalities within Westchester County, there are many regional forces that affect the livelihoods of those who live, work and play within the Town’s borders. It is important to recognize that the boundaries of the Town define a governmental entity but in many respects have little relationship to the physical features and market forces that drive the economy and direct the development of the region. The boundaries dividing New Castle from surrounding municipalities are traversed by features such as roads and other infrastructure, watersheds and natural habitats. New Castle encompasses six different school districts and seven different zip code areas²³. The Taconic State Parkway, Saw Mill River Parkway and Metro North Railroad’s Harlem Line connect New Castle to the surrounding municipalities of Pleasantville and Mount Kisco, White Plains, the Hudson Valley, and the New York City metropolitan region at large.

Given the number of municipalities surrounding New Castle, the Town’s location in northern Westchester and its proximity to New York City, the Town’s planning and development efforts are susceptible to the same influences discussed in the TDP regarding land use patterns, environmental protection, park and open space planning, water quality and sewage planning, housing and transportation. At the same time, New Castle’s location gives its planning and development efforts heightened importance in the region. As such, the Town’s future growth can, to a



Map 3 – Regional Location Map. Source: Westchester County GIS

²³ Zip code areas in the Town of New Castle include Chappaqua, Millwood, Mount Kisco, Armonk, Ossining, Pleasantville and Maryknoll. School districts in the town of New Castle include Chappaqua, Ossining, Yorktown, Bedford, Byram Hills and Pleasantville.

significant degree, be shaped by regional development pressures and by other local, County, State and Federal development policies and plans.

Planning programs and policies created during the last decades of the 20th century and as enumerated in the TDP helped to establish a regional planning framework that continues to influence local planning initiatives. Today the Town is working within this framework to address housing policy, environmental protection, infrastructure improvements and transportation planning with the understanding that progress made in any of these issue areas will require cooperation and the formation of collaborative partnerships between the Town and relevant Federal, State, regional and local stakeholders.

State and Regional Policies and Plans

Responsible Regionalism examines regional and State policies and development plans and establishes goals to ensure that New Castle's land use planning aligns with these policies and plans, which are listed below. This list is not inclusive, however it emphasizes programs and policies that are most relevant and impact local decision making to the greatest extent:

- **MS4 Stormwater Management Program:** The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) identified the Town of New Castle as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) in accordance with the "urbanized area" definitions of the Census Bureau. As a MS4, New Castle must implement a program of six minimum control measures as well as implement the heightened permit conditions for the East of Hudson Watershed. The six minimum control measures relate to public outreach, education and involvement, illicit discharge detection and elimination, construction site runoff control, post-construction runoff control and pollution prevention/good housekeeping. As an East of Hudson municipality, New Castle must undertake stormwater retrofit projects to reduce phosphorus contributions to local waterbodies. In addition, the Town's education program must include phosphorus. For more information regarding this program visit <http://www.dec.ny.gov/chemical/43150.html>
- **Westchester 2025:** The most direct regional influence from a policy and planning perspective is that of Westchester County. Westchester 2025: Plan Together is Westchester County's long-range land use planning policy which includes a toolbox to assist municipalities with undertaking local planning analyses as well as 15 policies to guide planning in Westchester County. The County's policies relate to the identification of development centers, enhancement of transportation corridors, transportation alternatives, establishing interconnected open spaces and recreational opportunities, nurturing economic climate, preserving natural resources, supporting the development and preservation of permanent affordable housing, etc. Like this Comprehensive Plan, Westchester 2025 is dedicated to sustainable development and the balancing of economic and environmental concerns. For more information regarding this program visit <http://westchester2025.westchestergov.com/>

- **New York City Watershed Agreement:** In the early 1990s, New Castle was one of twelve municipalities in Westchester County that negotiated the protection of land use and development rights with the New York City Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), who at that time was attempting to strengthen its watershed protection regulations. These negotiations came to a close in 1997 with the development of the historic Memorandum of Agreement to Protect New York City’s Drinking Water Supply (MOA). (visit <http://www.dos.ny.gov/watershed/nycmoa.html>) As outlined in the MOA New Castle would participate alongside Westchester County and nine other Westchester municipalities within the Croton Watershed [also known as the Northern Westchester Watershed Committee (NWWC)] to implement various watershed protection programs. The NWWC meets on a monthly basis to discuss program implementation in regards to the MOA. Three of the MOA programs directly affect New Castle and include:
 - Development of the *Comprehensive Croton Watershed Quality Protection Plan (the Croton Plan)* - The Croton Plan established a regional planning effort with the goals of assessing watershed conditions, identifying and putting forth strategies to reduce nonpoint source water pollution, prevent water quality degradation and enhance community character in the Croton Watershed. Some of the best practices outlined in this watershed plan have been incorporated into the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation’s Heightened East of Hudson Stormwater Permit.
 - Wastewater Diversion - The MOA gave rise to the 1998 Croton Watershed Wastewater Diversion Study, which as discussed in Chapter 2: Harmony with Nature, identified three wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) and four “focus areas” in New Castle that, because of the age of infrastructure and the population density of the area served, could be susceptible to becoming a source of water quality impairment. To mitigate the risk of an infrastructure failure, New Castle has been looking to implement a project to remove the wastewater from the three WWTPs and one focus area to a treatment facility outside of New York City’s drinking watershed. Some of the project funding has been allocated from the East of Hudson Water Quality Investment Program and the Town continues to seek the balance of funding from other sources.
 - Rules and Regulations to Protect New York City’s Drinking Water Supply - The MOA included the adoption of revised “Rules and Regulations for the Protection From Contamination, Degradation and Pollution of the New York City Water Supply and Its Sources”. These Rules and Regulations provided the New York City Department of Environmental Protection with land use oversight over development projects that occurred within their water supply watershed, regardless of municipal land use control. For New Castle, this has created another level of government oversight regarding development within the Croton Watershed area of the community. To view these rules and regulations, visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/dep/pdf/recales/regulations.pdf>

- **Westchester County Housing Settlement:** In August 2009, Westchester County entered into a Consent Decree in a federal action captioned *United States ex rel. ADC v. Westchester County*, 06 Civ. 2860 (DLC). Among other things, the Consent Decree required the County to ensure the development of at least 750 new affordable housing units by the end of 2016. New Castle was not a party to the litigation and was not bound by the terms of the Consent Decree. Nevertheless, the Town responded proactively by adopting a Model Affordable Housing Ordinance and taking other steps to accelerate the development of affordable housing units in the community. Between 2009 and 2016, the Town approved 62 units of housing that complied with the affordability requirements set forth in the Consent Decree.
- **NYMTC:** The New York Metropolitan Transportation Council (NYMTC) is the metropolitan transportation planning organization for New York City, Long Island and the lower Hudson Valley. NYMTC provides a collaborative planning forum to address transportation-related issues from a regional perspective, undertakes studies for transportation improvements, forecasts future conditions and needs, pools the resources and expertise of its member agencies to plan for transportation and development in the region and make decisions on federal transportation funds. Currently, NYMTC is developing a new long-term strategic plan which outlines NYMTC members' vision for the planning area and lays out a framework for maintaining and improving the region's transportation system going forward. This Plan has the potential to influence funding available to the Town for transportation projects.
- **Regional Economic Development Councils:** In 2010, New York State developed the Regional Economic Development Councils to enable bottom-up, locally stimulated development. It was the perception that top-down planning spearheaded by the State government had imposed economic development strategies on the varied regions of the State, ignoring the unique attributes and needs of each region and, as a result, weakening the State's economy. Under this program, New York State is divided into nine regions- each with their own economic development goals specific to that region's characteristics. Through the Consolidated Funding Application (CFA) process, municipalities submit requests for funding from various State agencies for development projects that could advance the region's economic development agenda. Westchester County is among seven other counties in the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council (MHREDC). In 2011, the MHREDC developed a Five Year Strategic Plan which presented fifteen distinct goals focusing largely on making the region the most attractive and supportive of market activity and the economy as possible, while creating desirable, sustainable well-paying jobs. What began as fifteen distinct goals in the Strategic Plan became four Core Strategies and four Supporting Strategies in the region's 2014 Progress Report, which continue to direct planning and funding opportunities in the region.
- **Watershed Protection:** As discussed in Chapter 2: Harmony with Nature, New Castle is located within four major watersheds: the Pocantico/Saw Mill River Watershed, the Bronx River Watershed, the Long Island Sound Watershed and the Croton Watershed. As early as the 1990's

Westchester County began to undertake watershed planning to safeguard water quality for drinking water protection, improved recreational uses, and protection of natural resources and biodiversity. Each of the following watershed initiatives involved the Town of New Castle as well as neighboring communities that shared boundaries within each of the watersheds:

- *The Indian Brook-Croton Gorge Watershed Conservation Action Plan* - This plan, developed by the Westchester County Planning Department, the Towns of Cortlandt, New Castle, Ossining and the Villages of Ossining and Croton-on-Hudson focused on protecting the drinking water supply for the Village of Croton-on-Hudson and the Town and Village of Ossining as well as the health of the Croton River. The plan included five major objectives: protecting and restoring natural resources, implementing stormwater management practices, promoting sustainable development, protecting wildlife and educating the public. The Town of New Castle is represented through the Indian Brook Croton Gorge Watershed Committee.
- *Croton-to-Highlands Biodiversity Plan* - A small portion of the western side of New Castle was included in the 2004 Croton-to-Highlands Biodiversity Plan, along with the Towns of Yorktown, Cortlandt, and Putnam Valley. The Plan inventoried native species and habitats and made recommendations for balancing development with biodiversity.
- *The Westchester County Greenway Compact Plan* - New Castle is one of 250 communities in the Hudson River Valley Greenway (the Greenway). The Greenway was established in 1991 “to continue to advance the State’s commitment to the preservation, enhancement and development of the world-renowned scenic, natural, historic, cultural and recreational resources of the Hudson River Valley while continuing to emphasize economic development activities and remaining consistent with the tradition of municipal home rule.”²⁴ In 2007, New Castle adopted the Westchester County Greenway Compact Plan, which qualified the Town for benefits including technical and funding assistance from the Greenway. The Greenway Compact Plan includes recommendations and strategies for development that the Town has agreed to take into consideration when making planning and development decisions. This Plan is aligned with the policies presented in the Compact Plan.²⁵
- East-of-Hudson Watershed Corporation - New Castle is part of the East-of-Hudson Watershed Corporation, a regional entity established to meet the heightened East of Hudson stormwater requirements of the MS4 stormwater retrofit program. Through this organization, municipalities in Putnam, Westchester and Dutchess County work collaboratively to address phosphorus reduction requirements.

²⁴ <http://www.hudsongreenway.ny.gov/AbouttheGreenway/OverviewandMission.aspx>

²⁵ See “The Greenprint – For a Sustainable Future... the Westchester Way – The Westchester County Greenway Compact Plan,” page 10, Patterns for Westchester

The character and form of a community is shaped by its Comprehensive Plan and the means to which that plan is implemented. New Castle and the municipalities that share its borders all have varying degrees of development in proximity to these shared political boundaries. For example, in some instances, development is similar to New Castle's in that it is low-density residential. In other instances, development is as much as two times as dense as that within the Town. These similarities and differences should be considered in local decision making to the greatest extent practical to be cognizant of the impacts of land use changes on neighboring municipalities. In addition, and as discussed in other chapters of this Plan, sustainable development and the incorporation of renewable resource use has become a priority for the region. This, combined with the need to update infrastructure systems (e.g. roadways, sewers, water systems), highlights the importance of pursuing Federal and State funding in partnership with our municipal neighbors.

Responsible Regionalism Goals

The policies and goals discussed within this Comprehensive Plan align with regional land use policy objectives. The structure of this Comprehensive Plan is a testament to this alignment. As we look to the future and implement the tenets of this document New Castle recognizes the symbiotic relationship that often exists between the Town and its neighboring communities resulting from our shared boundaries. As such, we must look to funding sources and mutual assistance where it is most appropriate and available. To that end, the following goals will position New Castle to be a responsible regional entity to both those who border our geographic boundaries as well as those at higher levels of government.

Goal 45. Align Town land use and development planning with regional sustainable development objectives and policies.

With the adoption of this Plan, New Castle is aligning its planning policies with those of the regional plans discussed above, including Westchester 2025, the MHREDC Strategic Plan, and the MHREDC Sustainability Plan. This Plan has positioned the Town to undertake zoning changes that encourage development which is consistent with regional sustainability objectives such as increasing housing affordability, enabling transit-oriented development, and preserving open space and biodiversity.

Goal 46. Strengthen cross-jurisdictional planning and coordinate with neighboring municipalities, State, County and regional agencies in project review of developments likely to cause impacts beyond the Town's borders.

The Town should strengthen its relationships with surrounding municipalities to fulfill its responsibility as a considerate neighbor, as well as to accomplish planning goals that have impacts across political boundaries. In identifying biotic and open space corridors that reach beyond New Castle's physical borders, the Town should coordinate with surrounding municipalities to preserve these corridors. When necessary, the Town should foster communication between neighboring

municipalities regarding relevant plan review that supplements the Westchester County referral process. The Town should also continue to participate actively in cross-jurisdictional watershed planning and protection. The Town should promote and help coordinate inter-municipal scenic road preservation, including working with state, county and local officials to mitigate impacts on our scenic roads from utility companies.

Goal 47. Coordinate Town infrastructure planning with regional infrastructure improvement objectives.

The Town should work with its neighbors to help accomplish regional infrastructure improvement objectives such as integrating Complete Street features on roadways, implementing sustainable waste management practices, maintenance of utilities and their aesthetic impact, and recycling wastewater. The Town should pursue creative ways to communicate and build relationships with State and County agencies to accomplish this goal.

Goal 48. Promote the consolidation of services and cost-sharing with surrounding municipalities, where possible.

Past initiatives such as Solarize Somers-New Castle and Community Choice aggregation have demonstrated that aggregating the Town's purchasing power with that of surrounding municipalities can result in lower prices for quality goods and services that benefit the residents of New Castle. The Town should identify other opportunities for cost-sharing with other municipalities and pursue funding opportunities to support these efforts. In particular, the town should pursue opportunities to cost-share in order to enhance sustainability efforts Town-wide. The Town should work with state, county and local officials to enhance cooperative emergency services.

Implementation

When we think about sustainability we want something that is long lasting and can withstand time. We recognize that there is a relationship between social, environmental and economic aspects of the community. In 2015 when we started pulling together the public engagement report, the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analyses of the TDP and the County Base Studies we thought about the interrelationship of the “silos” we clung to in the previous comprehensive plans. We examined six different regional sustainability frameworks ranging from LEED-ND to the Mid-Hudson Regional Sustainability Plan and determined that the American Planning Association Comprehensive Plan Standards and Best Practices provided the most complete sustainability framework, encompassing the main tenants of all the other frameworks and plans to position this comprehensive plan in a manner that will align with Federal, State and regional planning objectives. This will bolster the Town’s position for Federal, State and regional funding. The nature of the goals contained herein and their origin, which is heavily rooted in public engagement, will enable this plan to stand the test of time.

Presented in this Chapter, you will find an Implementation Table which identifies the Comprehensive Plan goals but more importantly identifies the actions that should be implemented to achieve each of the goals. Actions are classified as one of the following: Study and Analysis, Zoning Study, Interagency Coordination, Outreach and Education, Legislative Changes, Capital Improvements. Ideally the actions, set forth in the Implementation Table, will be incorporated into the yearly Town budget process. As part of the budget submission for the Development Department, the Town Board will receive recommendations based on current work programming associated with the Implementation Table and will be given the opportunity to review and budget for those specific actions that it deems priority for implementation during the following year. Once identified by the Town Board, the prioritized action items will become part of the daily Town work program (handled by professional staff or consultants). It is important to understand that undertaking actions may lead to additional actions that would be added to this table or may result in the removal of actions that are currently listed. As such, the actions are the elements of this plan that will change more frequently over time and will be revisited in association with the Town’s yearly budget process.

Livable Built Environment

GOAL #	GOAL	ACTIONS	ACTION TYPE
1	Preserve the bucolic residential character of the community's neighborhoods	Review and revise existing zoning regulations or develop alternative zoning regulations that encourage development that keeps with the scale and character of development in the Town's various zoning districts. This may include examination of land use characteristics (e.g. density, lot size, FAR, setback regulations, coverage calculations, special use permits).	Zoning Study
		Map and inventory existing special use permits outside of hamlet areas to understand their relationship to underlying zoning and aid in future land use planning. Map and inventory should include neighboring communities' zoning and special use permits.	Study and Analysis
		Review and revise existing subdivision and conservation subdivision design regulations to include low-impact development (LID) standards and smart growth principles. Consider new "smart growth subdivision" designation for new subdivisions incorporating these provisions.	Legislative Changes
		Identify existing conservation subdivisions, as well as general neighborhoods and neighborhoods under planning board jurisdiction, within the Town's property assessment system and GIS data.	Study and Analysis
		Redefine and codify Clearing and Grading Limit Line (CGLL) in relation to protection of natural areas. The new CGLL definition should center around the creation of a limit of disturbance during construction activity for the protection of open space areas across property lines and sensitive environmental features and conditions.	Study and Analysis
		Make property characteristics (e.g. parcel dimensions, elevation, steep slopes, streams, floodplains, wetland areas, sensitive habitats, and historic resources) publicly available through online database or website.	Outreach and Education

2	Locate higher density residential development in the hamlets, with density of development decreasing as distance from hamlet centers increases	Revise the regulations found in the zoning code that refer to transition areas between existing hamlets and surrounding residential areas. Revised regulations should enable higher density residential development that is consistent with and does not disrupt the bucolic character of areas adjacent to the hamlets. Consider the use of form-based codes within transition areas.	Study and Analysis
3	Facilitate a range of housing types that are affordable to a diverse residential population in the hamlets and surrounding areas	Strengthen zoning code to encourage the provision of mixed-use, multi-family, condominiums, townhouses, apartments, senior and workforce housing, and accessory dwelling units in or in proximity to the hamlets and their amenities, including retail, health care, and transportation. Consider revising minimum lot size, parking regulations, setbacks, incentives and other regulations to allow for a range of housing types. Mixed-use development should take priority over other residential development in the hamlets.	Zoning Study
		Consider the increase of percentage or number of affordable units required in new residential developments. Consider codifying a required percentage of affordable units in mixed-use developments/apartment buildings.	Zoning Study
4	Provide a range of housing types that are affordable to a diverse residential population throughout the community where supported by this plan	Review existing housing legislation and development incentives and revise to address current housing needs (see housing needs discussion in Livable Built Environment chapter). Consideration should be given to housing type, income, structural accessibility features, connections to the hamlets, and use of alternative transportation.	Zoning Study
		Consider an increase of the required percentage or number of lots for affordable housing units in new subdivisions.	Zoning Study
		Coordinate with financial institutions or non-profit organizations to identify existing market rate housing that can be used to meet multifamily and affordable housing needs.	Interagency Coordination

5	Encourage the placement of housing units of various economic value throughout new multifamily and mixed-use developments (i.e. market rate units next to workforce/affordable units).	Revise zoning code to ensure that affordable housing units are interspersed among those that are market rate, as opposed to clustered together or physically separate from other housing units, in all zoning districts which accommodate residential development.	Legislative Changes
6	Preserve and protect historic resources	Ensure the Town Clerk receives an updated list of historical landmarks/buildings every six months from the New Castle Historical Society.	Interagency Coordination
		Explore the possibility of establishing an ongoing internship program, or similar programs, with the Historical Society to stimulate research activity to aid in the cataloging of historical assets that have not yet been considered such as trees, parks, businesses and streets.	Interagency Coordination
		Provide access to the Historical Society website directly from the Town website.	Interagency Coordination
		Coordinate with the Historical Society to develop a "Welcome Package" with historical information to be given to new residents along with their tax information etc. upon their move to New Castle.	Interagency Coordination
7	Support the improvement and promote the use of alternative transit services including rail, bus, and school transportation.	Coordinate with Westchester County Department of Transportation (i.e. Bee Line) to provide more frequent and reliable bus service as well as more cross-town service.	Interagency Coordination
		Create outreach program to promote alternative transportation.	Outreach and Education
		Coordinate with school districts to examine school bus ridership trends. If necessary, encourage ridership through outreach campaigns and pursue other measures to maximize bus use.	Outreach and Education
		Coordinate with the Chappaqua Bus Company to address the community's public transport needs. Consider providing bus service between the Town's hamlets.	Interagency Coordination
	Ensure underserved and/or special need populations have	Identify underserved and/or special need populations (e.g. seniors, families, disabled persons, workforce)	Study and Analysis

8	access to adequate public transportation services	Identify areas for enhancement of public transportation for populations in need.	Study and Analysis
		Provide support to Recreation and Parks in provision of public transportation for seniors when necessary.	Study and Analysis
		Engage with merchants on making mass transit easier for their employees to use and access.	Outreach and Education
9	Alleviate traffic congestion	Explore use of alternative traffic circulation patterns in and around the Chappaqua Train Station during morning and afternoon rush hour.	Study and Analysis
		Identify intersections prone to congestion and conflict (e.g. railroad grade crossing at Roaring Brook Road and the Saw Mill River Parkway) and develop solutions to improve traffic flow.	Study and Analysis
10	Provide access for non-motorized forms of transportation, make streets accessible for all users (i.e. pedestrians of all ages and abilities, cyclists, vehicles) and promote walkability	Generate Complete Streets policy document specific to the Town. Include Complete Street techniques and best practices where reasonable when constructing, maintaining or upgrading street infrastructure.	Study and Analysis
		Develop a comprehensive sidewalk plan, which includes identification of priority areas for new sidewalk construction and rehabilitation of existing sidewalks. Focus should be placed on commercial areas and outlying neighborhoods.	Study and Analysis
		Examine the feasibility of sidewalks within and between neighborhoods that do not border commercial areas.	Study and Analysis
		Examine the feasibility of sidewalks on all major routes including Rt. 117, 100, 120, 133, 128.	Study and Analysis
11	Improve circulation and connectivity within and between the hamlets and Chappaqua Crossing	Examine opportunities to enhance bike, pedestrian and alternative transport between Chappaqua, Millwood and Chappaqua Crossing.	Study and Analysis
		Review and update parking standards to reflect desired land use (including availability of public parking in hamlet areas, minimum parking standards, etc.).	Zoning Study
		Undertake a parking feasibility study to analyze the opportunities and needs for parking in Chappaqua including a future needs forecast and shared parking.	Study and Analysis

		Enhance visibility of public parking opportunities in the hamlets through directional signage.	Capital Improvements
		Develop a wayfinding program (e.g. consistent signage) to improve connections between the Chappaqua Train Station, hamlets, and other destinations of local and regional importance.	Capital Improvements
12	Improve accessibility of train service	Address traffic circulation issues at the Chappaqua Train Station pick-up/drop-off areas.	Study and Analysis
		Explore opportunities for public-private partnership to construct parking structure near train station.	Interagency Coordination
13	Ensure adequate infrastructure service to meet existing and future demand (i.e. roads, stormwater, sewer, gas, mircogrid, combined heat and power, potable water, fire suppression, lighting)	Develop Infrastructure Inventory, Repair and Replacement Plan that can be accessed by all Town departments. This Plan should include the history of infrastructure district creation (where applicable), quantify existing infrastructure capacity and identify needed improvements including hazard mitigation measures as discussed in the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan.	Study and Analysis
		Review and update Capital Improvement Plan to prioritize, budget, and facilitate infrastructure repair, replacement and expansion where appropriate.	Study and Analysis
		Create a workgroup consisting of relevant Department Heads and Town staff to facilitate enhanced inter-departmental communications and coordination on planned and proposed capital improvement and/or infrastructure repair and expansion projects, as well as large private developments that could impact public infrastructure.	Interagency Coordination
		Investigate the feasibility of extending sewer service to the Millwood hamlet, areas of higher density, and where septic systems are failing.	Study and Analysis
		Require applicants to loop water systems and other relevant infrastructure as part of site plan and subdivision design.	Legislative Changes
		Explore the creation of maintenance districts for hamlet infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, parking lots) and solid waste management.	Study and Analysis

		Explore the creation of a program to inspect sewer laterals from private structures that are currently connected to the Westchester County sewer system. Such a program should include lead detection and illegal connections.	Study and Analysis
14	Promote development in areas with existing infrastructure over areas with limited or no infrastructure services	Identify and map limits of existing infrastructure (i.e. sidewalks, sewer, water) in relation to surrounding land use. Prioritize expansion potential based on density of surrounding development, allowing for expansion where higher densities and infrastructural provisions exist while maintaining adequate transition zones between existing densities.	Study and Analysis

Harmony with Nature			
GOAL #	GOAL	ACTIONS	ACTION TYPE
15	Protect and maintain the Town's environmentally sensitive areas and natural resources	Review and strengthen existing Environmental Protection Overlay and environmental review process to ensure adequate protection of wetlands, wildlife, wildlife and open space corridors, steep slopes, watersheds, rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, trees and forests, flood plains, aquifers, potable aquifers, special rock outcrops, and ridgelines.	Legislative Changes
		Explore the feasibility of amending the existing wetland mitigation statutory requirement to allow for off-site mitigation within the same drainage basin.	Legislative Changes
		Revisit tree replacement statutory requirements to allow planting of shrubbery in addition to trees to enhance quality of mitigation plantings and natural habitat. Consideration should be given to the definition of shrubbery, criteria to equate the value brought by shrubbery versus trees, etc.	Legislative Changes
		Review tree removal regulations to ensure statutory requirements are sufficient in protecting ecologically and historically significant trees.	Legislative Changes
		Create public education materials regarding tree removal regulations (i.e. ecological impact, criteria for removal, permitting process, mitigation requirements).	Outreach and Education
		Create education materials for landscape contractors regarding proper management and maintenance of riparian areas.	Outreach and Education

16	Promote plant and animal biodiversity through the restoration, connection, and protection of natural habitats	Prepare a comprehensive Town-wide Biodiversity Management Plan that includes a Natural Resources Index (NRI), supports regional sustainability and is coordinated with the Town's Open Space Management Plan.	Study and Analysis
		Work with the DEC and the Town's environmental boards or other volunteers to identify and map different habitat areas and species to be included in the NRI. The NRI should include an updated list of endangered/threatened species as well as detail why these species are critical to the biodiversity of the area.	Interagency Coordination
		Create protection areas, corridors and regulations that protect habitat areas. Coordinate with the review and revision of the Open Space Management Plan.	Legislative Changes
17	Manage and reduce the impacts of dangerous and/or invasive plants and animals (e.g. deer, coyotes, vines, etc.)	Identify invasive species (plants and animals) and their impacts on local habitats.	Study and Analysis
		Develop an action plan to reduce identified impacts.	Study and Analysis
		Continue to disseminate information found in the Town's Coyote Response Plan to help residents understand coyote behavior and enhance awareness of safety techniques.	Outreach and Education
		Provide residents with educational materials that address the control of vines and invasive plants.	Outreach and Education
18	Protect and manage open spaces and undeveloped lands	Update Town's Open Space Management Plan. The OSMP should include defined "open space" criteria and catalog properties based on diversity of habitat, connectivity to other properties of open space value, and potential use for recreational purposes. Large lots should be examined for their contribution to open space value.	Study and Analysis
		Identify and map locally significant scenic vistas.	Study and Analysis
		Codify protection of scenic vistas.	Legislative Changes

19	Mitigate the negative impacts of stormwater runoff and plan for a lasting potable water supply	Require green infrastructure techniques (e.g. permeable surfaces, vegetated infiltration basins) for new developments through Town regulations.	Legislative Changes
		Create incentives for retrofitting existing developments to include green infrastructure features to reduce storm flow runoff and increase infiltration of rainfall.	Legislative Changes
		Include green infrastructure features on Town-owned properties where appropriate.	Legislative Changes
		Require applicants to incorporate hydrologic and hydraulic analyses of water courses and pipe networks (i.e. test water quality, chemical composition, volume and peak flows) that could be impacted by their development in their site plan application.	Legislative Changes
		Consider conducting a Town-wide or targeted area aquifer study to assess quantity and quality of groundwater.	Study and Analysis
20	Encourage water conservation and reuse	Establish a Town-wide water conservation and reuse program.	Study and Analysis
		Encourage alternative graywater and rainwater use/reuse through research and education. Promote xeriscaping where appropriate.	Outreach and Education
		Examine Town operations to assess where water can be reused.	Study and Analysis
21	Ensure the sustainability/resiliency of infrastructure	Adopt codes or design standards for new public infrastructure that will increase energy and water efficiency. Utilize a green or sustainability rating system for infrastructure improvement projects.	Legislative Changes
		Develop targeted strategies to improve the resource efficiency of public infrastructure systems (e.g. data collection, continual monitoring).	Study and Analysis
		Make specific upgrades to infrastructure systems that will increase energy and water efficiency, such as sensors at critical manholes to continually gage water flow, replacement/upgrades to smart water meters.	Capital Improvements

		Develop training programs for infrastructure operators on energy and water efficiency techniques that can be incorporated into their daily activities.	Outreach and Education
22	Ensure sustainable construction and design of buildings to minimize their environmental impact throughout their lifecycle	Review application of green building code and its applicability to all types of development, including a broader range of municipal, commercial, and single and multi-family residential buildings.	Study and Analysis
		Consider adopting a stretch code that requires more rigorous energy regulations for newly constructed and existing buildings than the base energy code. Utilize NYSERDA's model stretch code language, available at the end of 2016.	Study and Analysis
		Explore ways to strengthen Town code and enforcement provisions regarding construction and demolition site management and clean-up.	Study and Analysis
		Partner with local contractors to develop educational materials to promote green building practices.	Outreach and Education
23	Promote proper maintenance and sustainability of wastewater disposal systems	Work with Westchester Department of Health, New York City Department of Environmental Protection, and the East of Hudson Watershed Coalition to collect information regarding septic system maintenance and performance to ensure continued compliance with the Town's MS4 permit.	Interagency Coordination
		Include maintenance reminder and septic system education in annual Town mailing.	Outreach and Education
		Work with Westchester County and the Northern Westchester Watershed Committee to establish a program (including financial assistance) to repair or replace failing and substandard septic systems.	Interagency Coordination
	Reduce pollution from buildings, transportation, commerce and human activity	Work with the Town's relevant review boards and committees to create innovative outreach campaigns to educate the public on environmental pollutants and promote behavioral change.	Outreach and Education

24	Organize school and community “green teams” to promote household practices that reduce GHG emissions, such as increased recycling.	Outreach and Education
	Review and revise New Castle Town codes pertaining to air, light, noise and odor to meet best practice. In consideration of light pollution regulations, view of the nightscape should be preserved when safety is not a concern. Specific attention should be paid to differing land uses (i.e. residential, commercial).	Legislative Changes
	Create Air Action Plan to reduce air pollution from various sources (e.g. building and vehicle emissions).	Study and Analysis
	Consider regulating landscaping and plantings to minimize obstruction of sunlight on neighboring properties.	Study and Analysis
	Adopt a waste management plan that identifies the community's greatest sources of waste, sets formal waste reduction targets and establishes actions to help reach the community's waste reduction aims. This should include food waste from both residential and commercial uses.	Study and Analysis
	Create or revise existing recycling program to include recycling targets and assessment of the feasibility of creating a compost collection service and ensuring recycling is provided at all events held by the Town, etc.	Study and Analysis
	Promote the concept/educate the public about the environmental benefits of residential waste reduction and recycling. Inform residents and businesses in their roles in achieving waste reduction targets.	Outreach and Education
	Develop a sustainable and environmentally preferable municipal purchasing policy (e.g. paper products, office supplies, kitchen supplies) and implement. Work with the Chappaqua Central School District to do the same.	Study and Analysis

		Maintain services for recycling or proper disposal of obscure items including e-waste, aerosols, and medications. Ensure residents are aware of these services, or where they can access these services if the Town is not able to provide them. Encourage the use of the "Take It or Leave It Shop."	Outreach and Education
25	Reduce the Town's carbon footprint, encourage climate change adaptation measures, minimize energy demand and promote the use of alternative energy	Update the Town's Climate Action Plan. Include an updated inventory of government operations and overall community GHG emissions.	Study and Analysis
		Establish a new government operations emissions reduction target and implementation plan. Include targets for percent of government energy sourced from renewable energy (produced on-site or purchased from a utility) and targets for increased energy efficiency.	Study and Analysis
		Perform feasibility analyses to identify potential sites for renewable energy installations on government-owned properties and explore partnerships with schools, institutions, and homeowners associations to consider renewable energy installations on their properties.	Study and Analysis
		Create an inventory of all funding opportunities for energy efficiency and renewable energy projects in the State. Pursue those that are appropriate.	Study and Analysis
		Integrate energy efficiency projects and renewable energy installations into the Town's Capital Improvement Plan.	Capital Improvements
		Work with the Economic Incentive Corporation (EIC) to create a public and business education campaign for Energize NY Benefit Financing Program.	Outreach and Education
		Perform feasibility analyses for microgrids, especially at sites of critical infrastructure (e.g. supermarkets, schools, other critical uses).	Study and Analysis
		Perform feasibility analyses for combined heat and power and geothermal installations in neighborhoods and subdivisions.	Study and Analysis

		Adopt a Town green fleet policy that incorporates energy efficiency criteria for acquiring municipal vehicles.	Legislative Changes
		Complete retrofit of incandescent streetlights to LEDs. If necessary, create LED lighting best practices policy and update Town code accordingly.	Legislative Changes

Resilient Economy			
GOAL #	GOAL	ACTIONS	ACTION TYPE
26	Create a sustainable mix of commercial and residential uses within the hamlets	Undertake an analysis of development/infill opportunities in the hamlets consistent with community needs, public vision, and environmental and infrastructural constraints. This analysis should determine the net economic benefits of potential mixed use development and associated revenue forecasts of hamlet land use scenarios.	Study and Analysis
		Review and revise existing zoning regulations and requirements or develop alternative zoning (i.e. form based zoning) to better allow and encourage mixed-used development in the hamlets. This could include revising regulations regarding driveway width, building height, front yard setbacks, and parking requirements and associated easements, among other regulations. Zoning around the Chappaqua train station should encourage a higher level of transit-oriented development.	Zoning Study
		Revise zoning and design standards to include appropriate smart growth principles (e.g. LEED-ND) to encourage sustainable development in hamlet areas.	Zoning Study
		Explore opportunities to diversify retail mix in hamlets and provide a wide range of goods and services. This may include the re-examination of Town code and previous resolutions regarding restrictions on certain common business types or the repetition of business types.	Study and Analysis
		Examine existing industrial zoned property to determine the best use of property consistent with the surrounding area in the case that properties become available for future development.	Study and Analysis

		Consider the creation of an Economic Development Unit to facilitate implementation of the preferred infill development scenario, assist property owners, and support local business community.	Study and Analysis
		Examine the impacts of and develop implementation strategies regarding the affects of e-commerce on hamlet businesses and the need to reposition the hamlets as destinations.	Study and Analysis
27	Create vibrant and walkable mixed-use areas in the hamlets that are well connected to public transit	Include smart growth principles in the development of hamlet design guidelines to create an active pedestrian environment.	Study and Analysis
		Develop design standards or complete capital improvements to better facilitate pedestrian connections to and from the commercial areas and the major transportation amenities in each hamlet (i.e. the North County Trailway in Millwood and the train station in Chappaqua).	Study and Analysis
		Explore opportunities to develop bicycle parking areas and beautify and enhance the comfort of bus stops.	Study and Analysis
		Examine and assess opportunities to revitalize or re-zone mid-King Street and Station Place to better connect the hamlets' commercial nodes.	Study and Analysis
28	Enhance the aesthetic quality of hamlets	Develop new or revise existing hamlet design guidelines which promote aesthetic continuity within hamlet areas. Guidelines should, where appropriate, utilize LEED-ND standards or other sustainable design practices for signage, street frontage, windows, awnings, building color and materials and street architecture.	Study and Analysis
		Conduct feasibility study for the creation of maintenance districts for hamlet infrastructure (e.g. sidewalks, parking lots) and solid waste management.	Study and Analysis

29	Attract, retain and support local businesses and establishments	Offer land use guidance to property owners seeking to expand or change businesses through meetings and educational materials.	Outreach and Education
		Create incentives to retain existing and attract new, local businesses that meet the needs of the community.	Study and Analysis
		Proactively pursue the location of green business (i.e. energy efficiency firms, solar panel providers) in the hamlets.	Study and Analysis
		Work with the Chamber of Commerce to provide new businesses with a "Welcome Package" that includes a warm welcome message and important contact information.	Outreach and Education
		Organize a coordinated marketing campaign to promote hamlets to potential tenants.	Outreach and Education
		Analyze feasibility of Business Improvement District.	Study and Analysis
		Promote investment in green infrastructure and renewable energy installments by retail building owners in the hamlets. Facilitate the use of PACE financing through Chapter 63: Energy NY Financing of the Town Code.	Outreach and Education
30	Stimulate patronage and activity in the two hamlets and at the Chappaqua Performing Arts Center (Wallace Auditorium)	Form civic activity task force or task existing groups with developing events and activities that showcase the Town's unique character and encourage arts and culture, as well as stimulate patronage of local businesses.	Outreach and Education
		Support Recreation and Parks Commission's efforts to schedule recreational programming near the hamlets on nights and weekends to stimulate patronage of local businesses.	Interagency Coordination
		Promote the Wallace Auditorium as a regional entertainment venue for arts and culture and to stimulate patronage of local businesses in the hamlets.	Capital Improvements
		Work with local businesses and the Chamber to promote business hours which complement recreational activities and Town-sponsored events.	Interagency Coordination

31	Promote complementary development between the hamlets	Investigate opportunities to develop public transit connections among the two hamlets.	Study and Analysis
		Encourage businesses to offer consumer benefits by partnering with businesses from each of the two hamlets.	Outreach and Education

Healthy Community			
GOAL #	GOAL	ACTIONS	ACTION TYPE
32	Increase availability of recreational programming and facilities	Conduct a parkland and facilities demand analysis. Survey the community to assess the recreational needs and interests of residents of all ages, socioeconomic status, ability, etc. Survey and analysis should address year-round programming and facility needs/interests.	Study and Analysis
		Update the 2007 Recreation and Parks Master Plan. Include the identification and prioritization of large recreational projects and incorporate into the Capital Improvement Plan, as well as the creation of new recreational programming that addresses the needs of residents.	Study and Analysis
		Explore opportunities to share recreational services and facilities with neighboring Towns and the region (e.g. athletic bubble).	Interagency Coordination
33	Expand, enhance, and maintain park and recreational space	Review and revise the Town's Open Space Management Plan to expand, enhance and maintain park and recreational space. Coordinate with the creation of the Biodiversity Management Plan and the update of the 2007 Parks and Rec Master Plan. Include identification of parcels that would function well as parkland for both passive and active recreational use.	Study and Analysis
		Maintain existing parks and nature preserves.	Capital Improvements
		Explore the development of pocket parks in residential neighborhoods and where necessary in the hamlets.	Study and Analysis
	Plan for equitable access to recreational services, schools, and arts and cultural facilities	Collaborate with Recreation and Parks Department to examine enrollment demographics and identify areas of improvements to ensure equitable access and programming for all residents, including those with special needs.	Study and Analysis

34		Undertake a facilities evaluation for all Town owned recreational facilities to ensure ADA compliance and accessibility for physically disabled participants.	Study and Analysis
		Continue open dialogue about amenity usage and scheduling with the Chappaqua Central School District.	Interagency Coordination
35	Improve trail and unimproved linkages between open space parcels and prominent destinations in the Town	Update the Town's Trail Development Master Plan. The plan should identify locations for new bike paths and walkways, as well as opportunities for bicycle parking, between nature areas and parkland and the Town's schools and hamlets. Continue to consider the development of a trail from Chappaqua Crossing and Greeley High School to the Chappaqua hamlet.	Study and Analysis
		Improve signage, guidance and maintenance of hiking trails.	Capital Improvements
36	Promote sustainable food practices	Continue to support year-round local farmer's markets.	Outreach and Education
		Partner with residents, ERB, Parks, local nurseries, and Green Thumbs to support existing community gardens in the Town when necessary (e.g. dedication of public space, zoning to allow for CSAs, determine entities in charge of maintaining, operating, and programming these spaces).	Study and Analysis
		Consider the feasibility of creating a green roof community garden within a hamlet or on an institutional property.	Study and Analysis
37	Provide clear information regarding social services through a variety of media, including both traditional and electronic media	Inventory all social, cultural, institutional etc. services in Town.	Study and Analysis
		Poll residents regarding their access to social services and the obstacles faced in accessing social services. Assess how access to and the provision of social services could be improved.	Outreach and Education
		Create social services bulletin on website.	Outreach and Education
	Improve Town communication channels and feedback	Evaluate the clarity and effectiveness of the format of the Town's website. Make improvements where necessary.	Study and Analysis

38	mechanisms	Create and disseminate instruction guides on how to access information on the Town's website for all different types of devices.	Outreach and Education
		Develop uniform processes and methods to post materials on the website for ease of resident access.	Outreach and Education
39	Improve road safety	Coordinate with Commissioner of Public Works on the creation of a Road Safety Plan and map. Investigate and identify road safety issues in Town. Consider utilizing Westchester County Base Studies traffic data and NYSDOT and NYMTC resources.	Study and Analysis
		Identify intersections and crossings that have shown high frequency of incidents and address pedestrian and cyclist safety at these locations.	Study and Analysis
		Pursue development of Saw Mill River Parkway Bridge at Roaring Brook Road and MTA Railroad crossing.	Interagency Coordination
40	Promote general public safety	Include elements in street, building and landscape capital improvements that reduce public injuries and improve public safety.	Study and Analysis
		Prepare public employees and first responders for violent incidences (e.g. shootings, bomb threats).	Outreach and Education
		Improve clarity and access to information (including emergency information) on Town's website.	Outreach and Education
		Establish public safety best practice fact sheets to be disseminated via varying media outlets.	Outreach and Education
	Promote public safety in natural disasters and emergency situations	Continue to update the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan as required and coordinate with the Capital Improvement Plan and other ongoing infrastructure planning.	Interagency Coordination
		Map identified mitigation initiatives from the Hazard Mitigation Plan and provide mapping to department staff reviewing capital improvement and private development projects to streamline implementation of mitigation initiatives.	Study and Analysis

41		Establish a policy/legislation that requires the incorporation of mitigation, resiliency and preparedness measures into local plans, design of projects and capital improvements (e.g. generators, microgrids, green infrastructure, green roofs, position of buildings).	Study and Analysis
		Develop a Post Disaster Recovery Plan which includes strategies for economic recovery.	Study and Analysis
		To fortify the Town's energy security, consider developing community and neighborhood microgrids and combined heat and power (CHP) systems	Study and Analysis
		Regularly test emergency communication systems	Capital Improvements
		Continue annual notification of septic system maintenance in annual Town newsletter. Expand educational information to include emergency preparedness.	Outreach and Education
		Promote awareness of evacuation and recovery procedures in the event of an emergency at Indian Point through educational mailings and Town website.	Outreach and Education
42	Reduce flooding frequency and intensity in flood-prone areas	Continue to utilize the Town's Hazard Mitigation Plan to identify drainage improvements and flooding prevention projects.	Study and Analysis
		Strengthen floodplain management ordinance to reduce vulnerability to flooding and erosion.	Legislative Changes
		Align flood prevention strategies with those found in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System. Consider participation in the Rating System.	Study and Analysis
43	Mitigate hazards posed by utility poles, wires and infrastructure	Promote the burial of above-ground utility lines where appropriate.	Interagency Coordination
		Coordinate with Con Edison to undertake aesthetic and safety improvements of existing above-ground services.	Interagency Coordination
	Reduce adverse impacts of environmental hazards or disasters on vulnerable	Identify vulnerable populations and determine potential needs during and after natural disasters or as the result of changes in the environment or adjoining landscapes.	Study and Analysis

44	populations	Inventory available Federal, State and local assistance for disaster recovery and make information accessible to residents.	Study and Analysis
		Investigate opportunity to address off site impacts of new projects, specifically to consider adjoining properties and the need to protect vulnerable populations from unintended consequences of development.	Study and Analysis

Responsible Regionalism			
GOAL #	GOAL	ACTIONS	ACTION TYPE
45	Align Town land use planning with regional sustainable development objectives and policies (i.e. Westchester 2025, the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Corporation's (MHREDC) Strategic Plan and Sustainability Plan, NYMTC)	Adopt the 2016 New Castle Comprehensive Plan which is aligned with the goals and policies of Westchester 2025 and the MHREDC's Strategic and Sustainability Plans.	Legislative Changes
		Undertake zoning changes to encourage development discussed within this Plan and is consistent with regional sustainable development objectives (i.e. housing affordability, transit-oriented development, preservation of open space and biodiversity).	Legislative Changes
		Ensure that local housing supply appropriately addresses regional housing demand through the update of the Town's housing policies and zoning designations.	Legislative Changes
46	Strengthen cross-jurisdictional planning and coordinate with neighboring municipalities, State, County and regional agencies in project review of developments likely to cause land use, transportation, and environmental impacts beyond the political boundaries of the Town	Identify biotic and open space corridors that go past the Town's borders. Coordinate with appropriate surrounding municipalities to preserve these corridors.	Study and Analysis
		When necessary, foster communication between neighboring municipalities regarding plan review that supplement the Westchester County referral process.	Interagency Coordination
		Participate actively in cross-jurisdictional watershed planning and protection.	Interagency Coordination
	Coordinate Town infrastructure planning with regional infrastructure improvement	Pursue innovative ways to communicate, negotiate and build relationships with the New York State Department of Transportation.	Interagency Coordination

47	objectives	Expand regional infrastructure and linkages for pedestrians and bicyclists. Map areas where linkages are appropriate. Examine the feasibility of sidewalks that facilitate non-motorized transportation across municipal borders.	Study and Analysis
		Explore connections/creation of local bike routes to connect with the North County Trailway.	Study and Analysis
		Partner with non-profit and private organizations on the implementation of sustainable waste management programs.	Interagency Coordination
		Coordinate with Westchester County Health Department to investigate opportunities for the beneficial reuse of stormwater and wastewater.	Interagency Coordination
48	Promote the consolidation of services and cost-sharing with surrounding municipalities where possible	Identify potential services appropriate for cost sharing approach.	Study and Analysis
		Examine funding opportunities to support cost sharing efforts.	Study and Analysis
		Continue to pursue arrangements similar to Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) and Solarize Somers-New Castle to enhance sustainability in the Town at lower costs.	Study and Analysis
		Work with neighboring municipalities to determine their interest in creating a uniform signage program along cross-jurisdictional transportation routes.	Interagency Coordination
		Coordinate with other municipalities to aggregate negotiating power with the State for relevant issues (e.g. aesthetic improvements of transportation signage, infrastructure needs, roadway improvements).	Interagency Coordination